## Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center Economic Development District

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Prepared for: U.S. Department of Commerce

Economic Development Administration

Prepared By: CEDS Strategy Committee

Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center





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Thank you one, and all, for your help in drafting this critically important document.

## **Executive Summary**

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) brings together the public and private sectors to create an economic roadmap to strengthen the coastal Georgia regional economy. This CEDS analyzes the coastal Georgia regional economy and serves as a guide for:

- Establishing regional goals and objectives;
- Developing and implementing a regional plan of action; and
- Identifying investment priorities and funding sources.

Additionally, the aim of the CEDS is to serve as a tool to integrate coastal Georgia's human and physical capital planning in to economic development planning and goals. Integrated economic development planning provides flexibility to adapt to global economic conditions and fully utilize coastal Georgia's unique advantages to maximize economic opportunity.

Section 1, *Background—Coastal Georgia Regional Economy*, paints a realistic picture of the current economic development situation in the region with a discussion of the economy; population; geography; workforce development and use; transportation access; resources; environment; and other pertinent information. The analysis also contains strategic findings that identify problems, issues, and opportunities posed by external and internal forces affecting coastal Georgia's regional economy. The analysis considers and identifies past, present, and projected future economic development investments in the region.

The Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center (CGRDC) conducted a survey and interviews with more than 50 economic development professionals to gain a broad cross section of perspectives from the coastal Georgia region. Surveys were sent to public and private economic development professionals.

Section 2, *Analysis of Economic Development Problems, Issues, and Opportunities*, looks to identify challenges and opportunities present in the coastal Georgia region. The rate of growth, both present and anticipated, presents important challenges to the region. One of these challenges is the growing service sector that is providing a number of lower wage jobs. Also, there are a number of important opportunities including the vibrant ports and associated logistics, distribution, and warehousing industries.

Workforce investment strategies are a critical aspect of preparing the coastal region for present and future employment opportunities. Employment in some areas of the coast is limited by the number of available skilled workers. The local workforce investment board, Coastal Workforce Services, has recently completed a strategic plan. Excerpts of the recommendations from this strategy plan are included in this section.

This section also identifies and analyzes the economic clusters that are growing or declining within the coastal Georgia region.

Section 3, *Goals and Objectives—Defining Regional Expectations*, sets forth goals and objectives to address the economic problems of the region. All strategic projects, programs,

and activities identified in the CEDS Plan of Action (Section 6) work to fulfill the goals and objectives identified in this section. The goals represent broad, primary regional expectations.

One key goal of the CEDS is to provide guidance to the coastal Georgia region to attain sustainable, quality growth and create a diverse economic region. A second key goal is to support the draft guiding principle from the Coastal Comprehensive Planning process that is to guide the 6 coastal counties to share in jobs and investment that are created through the integrated balance of sustainable economic development initiatives.

Section 4, Community and Private Sector Participation, discusses community and private sector participation in the development and implementation of the activities and projects identified in the CEDS. This section details existing partnerships that support economic development in the region.

This document also briefly considers the ongoing Coastal Comprehensive Plan process. On February 11, 2005, Governor Sonny Perdue signed an Executive Order directing Georgia Department of Community Affairs to complete a Coastal Comprehensive Master Development Plan by September 2007. As outlined in the Executive Order, the Plan will outline a vision for Georgia's coastal area that promotes sustainable future development without compromising the region's valuable and vulnerable natural environment. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) will incorporate stakeholder input to address tourism, economic development and environmental management, housing, and transportation issues affecting Georgia's coastal area as it develops the plan.

Several counties in the region are in different stages of completing local Comprehensive Plans. These plans contain an Economic Development Element and are created through significant public and private input. Information from these plans was included in this document.

Section 5, *Strategic Projects, Programs, and Activities*, identifies regional projects, programs, and activities designed to implement the Goals and Objectives of the CEDS. This section includes projects that were disclosed to the CGRDC. Due to the nature of economic development projects, public disclosure is not always in the best interest of the community and the project. This section contains two separate lists. The first list is called the Suggested Projects List (SPL). The SPL contains suggested projects, programs, and activities. Each project within the SPL is also assigned a lead organization that is responsible for execution of the CEDS.

The second list is called the Vital Projects List (VPL). The VPL contains a prioritization of vital projects, programs, and activities that addresses the region's greatest needs. A project contained in the VPL could also be identified to enhance the competitiveness of the region.

Section 6, *Plan of Action*, discusses a series of actions that may be undertaken to implement the goals and objectives of the CEDS. These strategies will promote economic development and opportunity; foster effective transportation services; enhance and protect the environment; maximize effective development of the workforce consistent with any applicable State or local workforce investment strategy; promote the use of technology in economic development (including access to high-speed telecommunications); balance

resources through sound management of physical development; and obtain and utilize adequate funds and other resources.

This Plan of Action also contains a section that discusses the methodology for integrating the CEDS with the State of Georgia's economic priorities.

Section 7, *Performance Measures*, describes a list of performance measures that may be used in evaluation by the CGRDC to gauge successful implementation of the CEDS. Some of these key performance measures track the number of jobs created after implementation of the CEDS, the number and types of investments that will be undertaken in the region, the number of jobs retained in the region, the amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS, the changes in the economic environment of the region, and the diversification of the economy. Two additional measures that provide a strong assessment of the direction of an economy are Per capita income and bank deposits.

The performance measures noted in Section 7 may be tracked by the Regional Development Center/Economic Development District, and are potential measures for tracking economic growth and diversity. These measures will be refined as experience and time show relevance.

## Introduction

The Coastal Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversity and strengthen the regional economy. By completing this strategy, the region is eligible for economic development assistance investment from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The region served by the Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center (CGRDC) is also an Economic Development District (EDD) designated by EDA. Economic development assistance investments from EDA can help fund local infrastructure projects, technology-led economic development projects, and strategies to respond to sudden and severe economic dislocations (e.g., major lay-offs, plant closures).

The Coastal Georgia CEDS is a regional plan and is not intended as a replacement for county- or municipal-level plans, but rather as a consolidating document suggesting ways in which localities can accomplish more by working together. Some goals are easier to reach and have greater impact when planned and implemented on a regional basis.

The Coastal Georgia CEDS is strategic, not comprehensive, in nature. Limitations in time and resources create a focus on a few strategic issues rather than create a comprehensive plan addressing all aspects of the region.

The unique, beautiful, coastal area is especially susceptible to environmental degradation, requires special attention, and often poses limitations, in the way that the area is developed. These conditions require decision makers to think and plan differently, and to develop a more sustainable economy that protects the high quality of life and vital natural resources.

The Coastal Georgia CEDS will analyze the regional economy and serve as a guide to establishing regional goals and objectives, a regional plan of action, and the investment priorities and funding sources. The CEDS also identifies the lead organizations assigned responsibilities for its execution. As a performance-based strategic plan, this CEDS will serve a critical role in the region's efforts to grow our economic base in the face of accelerated growth, economic dislocations, competition, and other events challenging regional economic vibrancy. This CEDS is the result of a continuing economic development planning process, developed with broad-based and diverse public and private sector participation.

The organization responsible for the development of this CEDS is the Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center (CGRDC). As a recipient of Planning Investment funds from EDA, the CGRDC serves as the planning organization for the coastal Georgia Economic Development District (EDD), which is comprised of the member governments of the CGRDC region (ten counties and 35 cities). EDA Planning Investments provide support to the planning organizations for the development, implementation, revision, or replacement of a CEDS.

#### **CEDS Strategy Committee**

The CEDS Strategy Committee is responsible for developing, implementing, and revising the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy with the assistance of CGRDC staff. The

Strategy Committee is also responsible for outlining the methodology for cooperating and integrating the CEDS with the State of Georgia's economic priorities, incorporating relevant material from other government sponsored plans, and ensuring consistency with applicable State and local workforce investment strategies.

The CGRDC CEDS Strategy Committee represents the main economic interests of the region, and includes private sector representatives as a majority of its membership. A private sector representative is defined as an individual from any for-profit enterprise who is a senior management official or executive holding a key decision making position in that organization. In addition, the Strategy Committee includes public officials, community leaders, and institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private individuals. With consent, the 2007 Coastal Georgia CEDS Strategy Committee has been appointed by the Board of the Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center.

**Table 1: CEDS Committee.** 

Member	County	Representation
Ron Tolley	Liberty County	Community Leader
Clarence Knight	Camden County	Minority/Public Official
Howard Lynn	Glynn County	Public Official
David Bluestein	McIntosh County	Public Official
Ronald Shiffler	Bulloch County	Higher Education
Robert Stokes	Liberty County	Minority/Labor
Herb Jones	Effingham County	Private Sector
Barry Flonnory	Effingham County	Minority/Private Sector
Craig Root	Camden County	Private Sector
Randal Morris	Glynn County	Private Sector
Lynn Vos	Chatham County	Private Sector
Willie Fred Johnson	Long County	Minority/Private Sector
Doug Lambert	Bulloch County	Private Sector/Workforce Development Board
Dorothy Glisson	Screven County	Private Sector-Individual
Jean Bacon	Bryan County	Community Leader
Stacy Watson	Chatham County	Private Sector
Mark Bolton	Liberty County	Private Sector
Fred Hill	Bulloch County	Private Sector

## 1 Background—Coastal Georgia Regional Economy

Challenges to the economic prosperity of coastal Georgia are increasing in number. The key challenge is the lack of funds available to fully implement the planning and economic development needs of a region with a high growth rate and critical workforce issues. Planning investments, such as those offered by EDA, are essential for providing the tools needed to assist the Coastal Georgia EDD in realizing its potential. The EDA's investment in economic and infrastructure development activities has been beneficial to both local and State units of government. It has also been important to special purpose units of government (e.g. local development authorities, Georgia Ports Authority) within the Coastal Georgia EDD. Some of these jurisdictions have experienced substantial success in terms of economic growth, capacity to provide services for future growth, expansion opportunities, increased productivity, and operations efficiency. Generally, the economic benefits have generally been concentrated at the local level, rather than a regional scale.

Accessibility to the region's abundant natural resources is becoming more and more difficult as the population increases and land use patterns change to accommodate this growth.

The cost of living is increasing in the area without a corresponding increase in wages. This has led to a lack of affordable housing in the major employment areas in the region, and has contributed to changes in the commuting patterns of much of the regional workforce.

Coastal Georgia must find ways to ensure that the past's positive trends in economic development are continued into the future.

In general, the economic conditions of the region include:

- a growing service industry that usually contributes lower paying jobs;
- a high dependency on the tourism industry;
- a proliferation of logistics, warehousing and distribution industries near ports and interstate highways;
- a workforce that is not meeting growth needs due to retirement and the lack of availability of skilled personnel;
- a transition in the traditional manufacturing industry to utilization of new technologies and practices;
- a rapidly increasing cost of living for the region;
- a severe lack of affordable housing in employment centers; and
- an increase in travel times to work.

## 1.1 Economy

The economy of a region is impacted by a number of important issues. Issues such as employment and unemployment, income, workforce, and demographic characteristics help form the outlook for economic viability. The Coastal Georgia RDC region has a very bright future due to the affinity of the coastal region for employers, retirees, families, and

individuals of all ages. Underlying patterns in the economy are changing rapidly. These issues are discussed in greater detail in the following pages.

## 1.1.1 Commuting Patterns

The most recent data available for commuting patterns is derived from the 2000 Census. This data is old and reflects the coastal Region in the early stages of the current growth period. Based on the Census data, 91.7 percent of the total population travels to work in a car, truck, or van. The majority of these individuals travel alone. It is interesting to note that three-percent of the population walk to work. Fifty-one percent of the individuals traveling to work were on the road between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Seventy-one percent of the individuals traveled less than 30 minutes to work. Fourteen percent of the individuals traveled more than 45 minutes to work.

Antidotal evidence today suggests individual commuters experience travel times greater than this data suggests. This is especially true in the more urban centers of Savannah and Brunswick, but probably also evident in the smaller urban areas such as Hinesville, Statesboro, St. Marys, and Kingsland. The percentage of commuters traveling more than 45 minutes to work has increased significantly.

#### 1.1.2 Unemployment

According to the Georgia Department of Labor's 2005 Area Labor Profile, Labor Force Activity, the region's Civilian Labor Force was 296,986, with total employment of 283,199, leaving total unemployment at 13,787, or at a rate of 4.64 percent.

With approximately 6,200 new jobs created annually in the coastal Georgia area for 2006 and the same anticipated for 2007, total employment in the region is expected to reach more than 293,024 jobs by the year 2010. While job openings have risen from employment growth, the area has also seen an increase of approximately 7,100 jobs in 2006 for replacement of workers who have transferred to other occupations, retired, passed away, or left the labor force permanently for other reasons. This number of replacement jobs is expected to increase for 2007 as well.

## 1.1.3 Per Capita Income

The 2004 regional Per Capita Income (PCI) ranged from a high in Glynn County at \$32,049 to a low in Long County of \$17,763. The average regional Per Capita Income was \$23,976 in 2004, which according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis was approximately 72 percent of the 2004 National PCI of \$33,090 and 81 percent of 2004 Georgia PCI of \$29,628.

Total personal income for the region in 2004 was \$16,005,294, making it around six percent of the total personal income for the state for the same period, which was \$265,599,116. The average total personal income for the Coastal region in 2004 was \$1,600,529, which ranged from a high in Chatham County at \$7,553,308 to a low in Long County at \$193,950.

#### Average Weekly Wage

For all industries in the ten county coastal region, the 2005 Average Weekly Wage was approximately \$537. This is 71 percent of the average weekly wage for all industries for the state (\$752).

Chatham County had the highest average weekly wage of the region with \$663, while Long County had the lowest with \$386.

Table 2 shows the occupation with the highest average weekly wage broken down by County. The highest wages are found in the more urbanized counties.

Table 2: Occupation with Highest Average Weekly Wage, 2005.

County	Occupation	Average Weekly Wage
Bryan	Federal Government	\$839
Bulloch	Federal Government	\$829
Camden	Utilities	\$1,047
Chatham	Paper Manufacturing	\$1,359
Effingham	Utilities	\$1,406
Glynn	Management: Companies/enterprises	\$1,570
Liberty	Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	\$890
Long	Federal Government	\$640
McIntosh	Transportation and Warehousing	\$726
Screven	Federal Government	\$688

Source: Georgia Department of Labor.

Table 3, Sample of Occupational Wages provides a sampling of wages based on occupation. As one would expect, the highest wages are found in the professional careers such as attorneys and engineers. The table shows an averaged entry hourly wage and an occupation average hourly wage for selected occupations.

Table 3: Sample of Occupational Wages (hourly), 2006

Occupation	Entry	Average
Health Educators	\$12.32	\$18.27
Registered Nurses	\$18.61	\$24.23
Civil Engineers	\$19.71	\$28.99
Lawyers	\$21.99	\$44.21
Accountants and Auditors	\$17.27	\$23.89
Logging Equipment Operators	\$9.03	\$11.83
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	\$10.05	\$13.89
Construction and Building Inspectors	\$14.86	\$18.26
Agricultural Inspectors	\$13.30	\$15.71

Source: Georgia Department of Labor.

## 1.1.4 Employment by Occupation

According to the Georgia Statistics System: Employment Analysis, there are 11 major economic sectors in the coastal region. These sectors and their respective change in employment from 2004 to 2005 can be found in the following table.

As shown in Table 4 below, the most important industry, in terms of employment growth, was Education and Health Services, which saw an increase of 3,399 jobs. The second in growth was Professional and Business Services, with an increase of 2,311 jobs, followed by Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, with 2,198 jobs.

Table 4: Employment Changes 2004-2005.

Sector	Employment 2004	Employment 2005	<b>Employment</b> Change	Percent Growth, 2004-2005
Education and Health Services	41,904	45,303	3,399	8.1
Professional and Business Services	23,134	25,445	2,311	10.0
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	50,118	52,316	2,198	4.4
Leisure and Hospitality	32,704	33,899	1,195	3.7
Manufacturing	21,146	21,974	828	3.9
Financial Activities	10,079	10,859	780	7.7
Construction	13,055	13,671	616	4.7
Public Administration	16,346	16,910	564	3.5
Natural Resources and Mining	1,035	1,062	27	2.6
Other Services	7,393	7,409	16	0.2
Information	3,157	2,993	-164	-5.2
TOTAL	220,071	231,841	11,770	

Source: http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu/ssharega.html

## 1.2 Population Demographics

#### 1.2.1 Total Population

According to the population study undertaken by the Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development at the Georgia Institute of Technology in 2006, the total regional population for the ten county coastal area for 2006 was around 600,000. The total population recorded in the 2000 Census is 558,350 people. The Georgia Tech study projects a total population in the year 2030 of 844,161. Seventy-one percent of the total population lived in an urbanized area and 28-percent lived in a rural area. Leaders in the coastal region suggest that the total population may have been under counted by as much as 30 percent. This may be further exacerbated by the Census Bureau's inability to count undocumented Hispanics. Also, seasonal residents play a role in total population because the total population of many of the vacation areas on the coast fluctuates greatly.

The racial composition of the coastal region as defined in the 2000 Census is presented in Table 4. This table from the 2000 Census data does not include the Hispanic population. Empirical information today suggests that the Hispanic population may be more than ten percent of the total population.

Table 5: Race

Race	Total Population	Percent of Population
Total:	558,350	
White alone	349,048	62.5%
Black or African American alone	183,947	32.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1,594	0.3%
Asian alone	7,385	1.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	433	0.1%
Some other race alone	7,329	1.3%
Two or more races	8,614	1.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.

#### 1.2.2 Educational Attainment

The coastal region has evident needs regarding educational attainment when compared to two selected metropolitan counties such as Fulton and DeKalb. However, when compared to the State of Georgia, the educational attainment of the coastal region is on par. See Chart 5 for comparison of educational attainment between the coastal region and the State of Georgia. According to the 2000 Census, almost 20 percent of the region's total population did not graduate from high school. For the State of Georgia, 21.4 did not graduate from high school. For DeKalb and Fulton Counties, an average of 15.4 percent did not graduate from high school. The 2000 Census data shows that more than 30 percent of the total population graduated from high school. More than 13 percent of the total population graduated with a Bachelor's degree while more than 28 percent have engaged in some college education beyond high school. Only 5.5 percent of the total population has obtained an Associate degree and 21 percent has obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher. In Fulton and DeKalb Counties, 40 percent of the population obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher.

35 30.6 24.3 28.5 28.7 25.6 30 21.4 21.2 25 19.7 20 15 10 5 0 Did not Obtained Some College Bachelor's Graduate from Diploma degree or High School greater **Educational Attainment** ■ Coastal Region ■ State of GA

**Chart 1: Educational Attainment** 

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.

## 1.3 Geography

The geological history of the region has created the string of ocean islands (barrier islands) and marsh islands (hammocks) through a series of fluctuations in sea level. The higher ridges along the mainland were formed as primordial sand dunes when the higher sea level made the shoreline many miles further inland than where it is today. The region is very flat, with minor exceptions, having the typical topography of the coastal plain found throughout the southeastern United States. The only notable exceptions are the dune ridges and river bluffs, where elevations may reach 30 feet or more above Mean Sea Level. Elevations gradually increase as one moves inland, and the only natural contours are the remnants of prehistoric sea levels and associated movement of materials. Due to the low contour of the

region, rivers meander, having many miles of bending, winding channels creating ox-bow lakes, broad floodplains, and the most extensive marsh wetlands on the east coast.

Marshlands and lagoons that were located behind these primordial barrier islands trapped a range of sediments brought by a combination of ocean tides and discharge from major rivers having upland drainage basins many thousands of square miles in area. These sediments, including various types of sand, clay, and loam, vary from a few inches to many feet in thickness. The earlier deposits served as the natural base for vegetation, which in turn led to the formation of organic-rich topsoil as the debris of thousands of generations of plant and animal life were deposited.

## 1.4 Workforce Development

In April of 2005, Market Street, Inc. presented the final piece of the Coastal Workforce Services (CWS) Strategic Plan. The priority workforce development issues in the Coastal Workforce Services region, as purported in the Market Street Services, Inc. strategic plan are summarized here. A series of reports including *A Review of Trend Data* (analysis of existing studies), *Supply Analysis* (analysis of the workforce), *Demand Analysis* (analysis of the employers), and *Summary of Public Input* (garnered via focus groups and an online survey) were presented to the Steering Committee. Those reports formed the foundation for identifying the key issues facing coastal Georgia. The Coastal Workforce Services region includes Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, and McIntosh Counties. The Coastal Workforce Services region does not include Screven County while the CGRDC does include Screven County.

Sections 1.4.1 through 1.4.4 are direct excerpts from the key conclusions reported in the strategic plan.

#### 1.4.1 Review of Trend Data

This data is taken from a review of the five previous reports completed by Market Street Inc. and analyzed for this report. The priority workforce development issues in the Coastal Workforce Services region and its component communities include:

- A high level of poverty threatens the quality of the region's labor pool, and presents obstacles to the effective educating and training of the nine [CWS region] counties' existing and future workforce;
- Low rates of educational attainment, inferior skill levels for high-wage, New Economy industries, and a poor work ethic and level of occupational "soft skills" further threaten quality economic development in the Region. These factors risk disinvestment and expansion outside the Region by existing companies, and pose a difficulty in recruiting new firms to the area;
- There is a "disconnect" between educational and workforce providers, regional businesses and the available and potential workforce, thereby threatening the effective, sustainable economic growth that would raise average incomes and improve quality of life;

- A workforce rapidly diversifying through the in-migration of Hispanic and Latino residents, and non-English-proficient workers, creates additional workforce development challenges in the Region;
- The lack of affordable housing, combined with strong growth in low-paying service sector employment, is creating obstacles to the co-location of jobs and workers in their areas of residence; and
- Integration of workforce strategies with economic development strategies is essential to make the Region's workforce and economy more competitive and sustainable.

## 1.4.2 Supply Analysis

The Market Street, Inc. strategy confirmed many of the issues raised in the Review of Trend Data, and fleshed out the issues as they related to different sub-areas in the Region. Due to their relatively small sizes, the removal of the military or St. Simons data rarely had a noteworthy difference on regional demographics. Subtracting Savannah's numbers, on the other hand, did affect the regional data in several instances.

Based on the analyses in the Strategic Plan, the following key points describe the coastal Region's labor force:

- The population and labor force have effectively sustained strong growth, but this trend may weaken as the population ages with the retirement of the Baby Boom generation. The resulting contracted workforce, lower birth rates, and larger fixed-income retired population could strain regional resources in the short and long term.
- High poverty rates, low labor force participation rates, and low per capita income levels suggest that the existing population is in great need of more economic opportunities to develop and sustain an acceptable standard of living.
- The coastal region's public school systems, based on the number of failing schools, high drop out rates, and other indicators, are falling behind not only State averages, but also a standard necessary to effectively educate the Region's youth and decrease the percentage of the population without a high school diploma. In the New Economy, a high school diploma and, increasingly, a two- or four-year degree, are critical to obtaining and maintaining a viable career path.
- The apparent lack of affordable housing, and declining utilization of public transportation and child care services in the Region need to be addressed in order to ensure those who need these resources to maintain a job are able to get them.
- Several regional counties consistently fall behind relative to the primary indicators of the health and future of the Region's workforce. Those counties are Liberty, Long, and McIntosh, and less often Camden, Chatham, and Bulloch. Appropriately reallocating workforce development resources and efforts towards the most in-need counties while maintaining the overall vitality of all regional labor pools is important so that these areas do not fall further behind.

## 1.4.3 Demand Analysis

The following are the key points of the detailed analysis of the demand-side of coastal Georgia's economy, determined by analyzing indicators of establishments, employment, wages and earnings, key sectors, and small business resources.

- Coastal Georgia has strength in several sectors expected to continue to be strong at both the national and local level: Transportation and Warehousing, Tourism, and Health Care, and certain growing sub-sectors of Manufacturing (Transportation Equipment and Nonmetallic Mineral Products).
- Each County has its own set of economic strengths, diversifying the Region as a whole, but leaving individual counties reliant on their own respective strengths.
- The Tourism employment opportunities upon which the Region, or portions of the Region, are reliant do not offer wages that will help raise the low per capita income and average earnings of the Region's workforce. Manufacturing sub-sectors Transportation Equipment and Nonmetallic Mineral Products, and certain occupations within the Transportation and Health Care sectors, could.
- While projections can change in unexpected ways, current projections for 2002 to 2012 suggest stagnant growth in sectors that will be important to the future of the coastal Georgia economy: Wholesale Trade, Manufacturing, and Transportation and Warehousing. In terms of occupational growth, the two classifications of Healthcare Support, and Practitioners and Technical Occupations offer strong growth potential and competitive wages.
- Coastal Georgia has many economic strengths in a diversity of fields (Manufacturing, Transportation and Warehousing, Tourism, Health Care, and Military-related activities) that it could effectively leverage if the proper, strategic steps are taken.

## 1.4.4 Summary of Public Input

The input received at these focus groups was very diverse and included commentaries on a broad range of issues affecting workforce development in the coastal Georgia region. However, certain key themes and issues emerged from the sessions, and these are summarized below.

#### Awareness of CWS [Coastal Workforce Services] programs

- In most every focus group, the issue of awareness (or, more succinctly, "lack of awareness") of CWS programs arose.
- In many focus groups, the respondents' priority strategic action was to increase awareness of CWS programs.

#### Access to training/employment

• Accessibility to training/Career Center services and/or employment opportunities was another recurring theme in focus groups.

 Issues of accessibility focused on three primary categories: availability of a One Stop or Career Center in the County in question; transportation issues; and issues of child care.

## Communication among workforce development community, and between this community and private sector

- Many practitioners and key stakeholders commented in focus groups that agencies and providers were stuck in individual "silos," and often were not aware of complementary and/or overlapping workforce development programs and services offered by other sources.
- Trainers and educators also expressed frustration with the receptiveness of parents of school-age children to participating in their children's education. As a result, it was often difficult to make parents aware of available K-12 and technical college training programs and services.
- On the whole, the Region's private sector representatives were not aware of CWS
  resources, and very often had not heard of the agency before being contacted for this
  planning process.

#### **Need for regional equity in CWS programs**

- This was a recurring theme, predictably more acute in the "outer" and more rural counties of the Region (Bulloch, Camden, McIntosh, etc.).
- Representatives from communities that are situated in multiple regions (i.e., paired with non-CWS counties in their technical college region), noted that the funding contingencies associated with depending on multiple agencies for funding and programmatic assistance was a source of confusion, and also led to the perception that they were not receiving the full breadth of available services from each entity.
- Certain respondents noted that the structure of CWS (staff as Savannah employees and a nine-County Board) impeded the effective dissemination of agency programs and services to its full region.

#### Counties in transition/Regional diversity

- Because the coastal Georgia region is so large and diverse, its component communities often experience very different patterns of growth, infrastructure needs, workforce issues, etc.
- Counties with a large number of low-income families and "at-risk" youth also had
  differing needs for certain workforce development programs. These communities
  often experience high dropout rates, and have more critical needs for programs that
  target youth early in their school years to make them aware of potential careers and
  post-educational options.

#### Difficulty in reaching the "hidden" workforce

• Many focus group respondents mentioned the notion of the "hidden" workforce – the long-term unemployed, military spouses, persons with disabilities, workers displaced

from low-skill occupations who have not obtained additional skills or education, high school dropouts, etc.

• Of course, it was also noted by certain respondents that the available employment for these "hidden" workers was potentially sparse in certain communities where job growth was stagnant. So, even if these potential workers were contacted and given additional skills training, there may not even be jobs available for them to pursue.

### Realities of the job market

- The issue of the shortcomings of the Region's economy was brought up often in focus group discussions.
- However, it was also noted that many so-called "blue collar" positions exist in the Region (plumbers, electricians, landscapers, etc.) and pay very competitive wages, but there is a stigma attached to these jobs that prevents youth from being made aware of them, and workforce development entities from training for them.

The Summary of Public Input ends the excerpts from the Coastal Workforce Services Strategic Plan. These excepts are included in this document for reference and for their value as additional planning considerations.

## 1.5 Transportation Access

Interstate 95 bisects the region from the South Carolina border in the north to the Florida border in the south. This interstate is the primary north/south corridor between New York City, New York and Miami, Florida. A roadway improvement project is currently underway that will add additional lanes to the interstate highway.

Interstate 16 is the primary east/west connector for central Georgia, connecting Savannah in the east with Macon and access to Interstate 75 (access to Atlanta) in the west. Interstate 16 crosses Interstate 95 in Pooler, near the Savannah port facilities, making the northern part of the region a prime location for industrial development dependent upon access to multi-modal transportation and infrastructure.

#### 1.6 Resources

The coastal region contains a number of vital resources to support its economic outlook. The diversity of the coastal region resources, from the highly developed ports to the fragile marsh areas, provide critical inputs to the economy. This brief overview hints at the importance of all the coastal Georgia resources.

## 1.6.1 Georgia Ports Authority

Georgia's accessible ports are a major advantage for the manufacturing and distribution companies located throughout the region. Savannah's Mason Intermodal Container Transfer Facility enables a seamless transfer of shipping containers onto trains and shortens the shipto-market transit time to its delivery area. Facilitating global trade through strategic U.S. East Coast gateways, the Georgia Ports Authority is a leader in the operation of modern terminals and in meeting the demands of international business. Georgia's ports combine industry innovations with proven flexibility to create new opportunities along the entire global

logistics pipeline, delivering what the market demands. There are two major rail service providers, CSX and Norfolk Southern, in the region. Both offer piggyback service at Savannah and rail service at Brunswick.

#### Port of Savannah

The Port of Savannah specializes in the handling of container, reefer, breakbulk, and roll-on, roll-off (RoRo) cargoes.

#### The port includes:

- The Garden City Terminal is Savannah's ultra-modern, dedicated container terminal. At 1,200 acres, it is North America's largest single-terminal container facility.
- The 208-acre Ocean Terminal is a combination breakbulk and RoRo facility handling forest and solid wood products, steel, automotive and heavy equipment, project shipments and heavy-lift cargoes.

#### Port of Brunswick

The Port of Brunswick specializes in the handling of breakbulk, agri-bulk, and RoRo cargoes. At 1,700 acres, Colonel's Island Terminal moves both RoRo and agri-bulk commodities. Its autoport facility handles more than 12 major manufacturers. A dedicated breakbulk facility, Mayor's Point Terminal is a 22-acre facility specializing in forest products and general cargo.

Three facilities comprise the Port of Brunswick:

- Colonel's Island Terminal is a dual-purpose 345-acre dry bulk and Ro-Ro facility. It has the ability to hold 1.5 million bushels of grain, offers 1.2 million cubic feet of vertical space, and 135,000 square feet of flat storage. The facility's agri-bulk saw a 48.1 percent increase in Fiscal Year 01.
- Mayor's Point Terminal is a 22-acre breakbulk facility with 11 acres of open space, a 30-ton gantry crane and is serviced by CSX and Norfolk Southern rail systems.
- Marine Port Terminals, Inc. handles breakbulk, has 15 acres of open space, 453,000 square feet of covered storage, and rail service. The Marine Port Terminals' 145-acre facility handles a diverse mix of breakbulk and bulk commodities. It is managed by a private company.
- Agri-bulk Facility is a secured, fenced facility owned and operated by the Georgia Ports Authority. Colonel's Island Terminal is among the largest deepwater agri-bulk operations in the U.S. South Atlantic. Offering a turnkey service for U.S. Midwest and Southeastern agribusiness, the facility features a dedicated agri-bulk berth and is capable of accommodating a diverse group of agri-product in combined flat and vertical storage.

#### **Ports and Channel Maintenance**

Shipping channels and harbors serving the "world-class" ports in Savannah and Brunswick require extensive dredging in order to maintain the depths required to accommodate ocean-

going vessels. The millions of cubic yards of material removed in these operations are placed in "spoil areas" approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Conditions for carrying out dredge operations and for disposing of dredge material are permitted and monitored by the regulatory branch of the Corps.

Over the years, dredging and depositing discarded dredge material have raised concerns over various environmental consequences. Other concerns include the effects of significantly deepened channels on conditions in adjacent shore and water-bottom areas, rates of erosion, and changes in the hydraulics of water movement created by dredging.

In any case, dredging for harbor and channel maintenance is essential to ensuring the economic benefits of coastal ports.

#### 1.6.2 Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport

The Savannah International Airport provides the region with access to international passenger and cargo air service. The terminal building was built in 1994. The airport is located strategically near the junction of Interstates 95 and 16, and the Savannah Ports, while being only minutes from the historic downtown Savannah tourism destinations.

#### 1.6.3 Mineral Resources

The occurrence of mineral resources in the coastal Georgia region is not significant. There is some mining of phosphates, but not at significant levels in the region's northern counties. There are no records of any significant deposits of heavy minerals in the region.

## 1.6.4 Prime Agricultural Land

Prime agricultural land has always been a scarce commodity in the coastal region. Agriculture is not economically profitable in most of the coastal counties, with the exception of Bulloch, Screven, Long, and portions of northwestern Effingham counties. The lack of farming in the region is not caused by a recent decrease in prime farmland. The tidal and non-tidal marshes and wetlands that comprise nearly 50 percent of the land area in the region are not conducive to farming.

#### 1.6.5 Forest Lands

Coastal Georgia has an enormous area of land used for commercial forests. Of the region's total land area, over half, or about 3,300 square miles, is forested<sup>1</sup>. In addition to this commercial forest, another 17 percent of the land area is held by local, state, or federal government, much of it is also forested. Although forestry itself is a relatively small employer in the region, manufacture of paper and other forestry products is a major enterprise, employing over 4,000 workers in some half dozen plants scattered throughout the region.

Forestry as an economic enterprise is also important because timber companies own much of the land on the fringes of developed areas, including lands that are periodically marketed for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Georgia County Guide. The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, 2007.

residential and commercial uses. Due to the sheer size of these tracts and their proximity to developing areas, projects proposed on former timberland are often among the largest, in terms of both gross acreage and volume of construction. In some cases, forestry companies have their own development subsidiaries, while others may simply sell the land to independent developers.

#### 1.6.6 Water Access, Boating, and Commercial Fishing

Recreational use of coastal waters for boating and fishing appears to be increasing at a much faster rate than population growth. There are various reasons why these activities may compromise the condition of environmental resources, including contamination from motor lubricants and fuels as well as increased shoreline erosion caused by vessels and by construction and use of dock facilities, resulting in disturbed or destroyed marine or estuarine habitat.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, which issues permits for construction of private docks, reports that between 250 and 300 permits have been issued annually for building and replacing such docks along coastal rivers and creeks in recent years. In the late 1990's this number was 75 to 100 permits annually. In 1997 there were 28 public marinas, and 36 public boat ramps. In 2007, there are 13 public marinas and 39 public boat ramps. This represents a loss of 19 percent of the public access points. While there is some interest in promoting the use of community docks to reduce the proliferation of private docks that accompany the rapid growth in residential development of waterfront areas, no official state or federal policy has been adopted.

Commercial fishing activities, primarily shrimping, disturb water bottoms in near-shore areas by using "trawl nets" that destroy vegetation and increase turbulence. Compared with channel dredging and maintenance, these effects are considerably less significant.

#### 1.6.7 Shoreline Protection and Beaches

Georgia enforces provisions of its Shoreline Protection Act by reviewing permit applications for new development or significant alteration of existing development along oceanfront areas. In effect, this law only influences development on Jekyll Island, St. Simons Island, Sea Island, and Tybee Island. A building "set-back" line established under the law is determined by the height of naturally occurring native vegetation. In an attempt to reduce hazards to dunes and shorefront vegetation, no development may occur "oceanward" from this line without a permit.

#### 1.7 Environment and Natural Resources

The 10 counties in the coastal Georgia region have an abundance of natural resources, which provide its inhabitants and visitors with a wealth of ecological, economic, and recreational advantages.

#### 1.7.1 Climate

The coastal region is classified as subtropical, favored by both latitude and proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, resulting in moderate temperatures. Average winter temperature is about 45 degrees and the average summer temperature is near 80 degrees. Temperature exceeds 90

degrees from 75 days (coastal) to 80 days (inland) a year. Freezing temperatures in winter are infrequent (averaging 12 days a year on the coast, 25 days a year inland) and seldom last longer than half a day at a time. Humidity is high, averaging between 60 percent and 75 percent, higher in early morning and decreasing slightly by early afternoon.

Annual rainfall ranges between 49 and 54 inches, with slightly higher levels just inland from the coast. Snow is rare and short-lived, although in winter hail and freezing rain are not uncommon. Seasonally, rainfall is greatest between June and September, when over one-half of the annual rainfall occurs in one-third of the year. Because of this pattern, there is a seasonally high water table (superficial aquifer) in October. November is the driest month, with an average of about two inches of rain. Year round, there are between 75 and 80 days when more than one-tenth of one inch of rain falls.

Like any coastal area along the Atlantic seaboard, coastal Georgia is subject to hurricanes and severe tropical storms. Due to the contour of the eastern shoreline of the Southeast, Georgia is more protected from the open ocean and therefore somewhat less prone to hurricane risk than many other coastal areas. Historically, storms of hurricane intensity occur less than once in 10 years and very few of these have produced severe damage.

#### 1.7.2 Major Water Management Issues in Coastal Georgia

A brief list of the major water management concerns related to development includes the following:

- Saltwater intrusion and seawater encroachment into the primary aquifer caused by concentrated withdrawal;
- Increased runoff and erosion caused by land clearing, excavation, and construction of impervious surfaces;
- Higher levels of non-point source contaminants such as fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and petroleum-based substances;
- Increased loading of organic materials from wastewater/sewage systems and septic tanks;
- Infiltration of surface contaminants into groundwater through aquifer recharge areas; and
- Disturbance of marine, estuarine and upland habitat caused by docks, channel dredging, commercial fishing, forestry, and land clearing activities.

## 1.7.3 Ground Water Supply and Saltwater Contamination

For many years, planners and resource managers have been aware of the problem of saltwater intrusion (from adjoining confined reservoirs in limestone formations) and excursion (from the fissures in water-bearing limestone leading to the ocean) in the Floridan aquifer. These effects are a result of the declining pressure caused by large and concentrated amounts of withdrawal from this principal aquifer system used for nearly all public and industrial water supplies in the region.

#### 1.7.4 Water Use

The majority of water use in the coastal area is for power generation and industrial production that is water-intensive-- namely pulp and paper manufacturing. Those counties with conspicuously high per capita water consumption (Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, and Liberty) are those with one or more such manufacturers. Due to limitations on further concentrated withdrawal of groundwater (because of saltwater intrusion) and the high cost of treatment and distribution of surface water, it is generally recognized that there can be no new locations or major expansions of such industries along the coast unless alternative sources of water are used, presumably surface water.

#### 1.7.5 Wetlands

With about half of the region's land area equally divided between tidal and freshwater wetlands, public programs regulating their use are of obvious concern to coastal Georgia.

The Section 404 program under the Clean Water Act does not prohibit development activities within jurisdictional wetlands. However, the extensive requirements for identifying potential impacts, seeking alternative sites, and devising methods of controlling impacts, the development of such areas is severely restricted. Banks, developers, and others involved in land development are justifiably apprehensive of projects in areas that could be construed as jurisdictional wetlands. On the other hand, there are many exemptions from the federal law, including agriculture (for existing acreage in farmland), silviculture (forestry), and isolated (non-contiguous) wetlands.

#### 1.7.6 River Corridors and River Basins

There are five river basins in the coastal region: The Savannah, the Ogeechee, the Altamaha, the Satilla, and the St. Marys. Local and regional attention has recently been focused on the quality and quantity of ground and surface water.

## 1.7.7 Floodplain Management

Most of the coastal land area is within the 100-year floodplain, as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and depicted on the federal flood insurance maps.

#### 1.7.8 Barrier Islands

All 100 miles of Georgia's ocean beaches are on the seaward faces of barrier islands. In spite of their obvious attraction for commercial and residential use, ten of the 18 major barrier islands along Georgia's coast are in public ownership. Except for Jekyll Island in Glynn County, none of these publicly owned islands are accessible by car from the mainland. The rest are designated for wildlife management, environmental research, and/or undeveloped recreational uses. Of the total land area of the 15 largest barrier islands, about 65 percent is in public ownership (36 percent state and 29 percent federal). The Georgia barrier islands are unparalleled in the continental United States as undisturbed islands in their natural state. Because of their uniqueness, importance to environmental research and habitat for numerous species, and particularly because of their ownership, it is unlikely that development will occur on any of the undeveloped islands in the foreseeable future.

Due to the focused concentration of development potential on only three of the ten largest barrier islands in Georgia, those with this potential are confronting considerable growth pressure. Both Tybee Island and St. Simons/Sea Island (combined here due to their accessibility by way of only one causeway from the mainland) are continually undergoing public scrutiny of development proposals and their consequences. As infill development continues and the density of land use increases, the potential for conflicts over development issues can be expected to escalate. It is therefore extremely important that these areas are properly managed to preserve the environmental balance of their fragile ecosystems.

#### 1.7.9 Other Resources that are of Regional Significance

There are numerous areas that are classifiable as environmentally sensitive in the coastal region. Among these are tidal marshlands; freshwater wetlands; habitats of critical and endangered species; hammocks (marsh islands); beaches, dunes, and the sand-sharing system; and aquifer recharge areas (for the Floridan aquifer). As part of the Georgia Coastal Management Program, the state addresses areas that are of particular importance because of their coastal-related values or characteristics, or because they face pressures, which require detailed attention beyond the general planning and regulatory system. As a result, these areas require special management attention within the overall coastal program. This special management may include regulatory or permit requirements applicable only to the area of particular concern. It also may include increased intergovernmental coordinating, technical assistance, enhanced public expenditures, or additional public services and maintenance to a designated area.

#### 1.7.10 Areas of Particular Concern

Areas of particular concern include areas or resources of such special importance and concern that the state has established regulatory and/or management controls over them. These areas include: Areas of Historic, Archaeological, Cultural, and Paleoentological Significance; Barrier Islands; Marsh Hammocks; Aquifer Management and Protection; Economic Development Areas; Public Access and Open Space; Freshwater Wetlands; Navigational Channels; Beaches, Dunes, and the Sand Sharing System; Rivers and Adjacent Wetland; Shore Bird Nesting Areas; and Ocean Management. State laws, such as the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act, the Erosion and Sedimentation Act, the Shoreline Protection Act, and the Water Quality Control Act serve to protect these environmentally sensitive areas.

#### 1.8 Other Pertinent Information

While this information is included here under Pertinent Information, the topics included here are no less critical to the viability of the regional economy. Included in this section are several excerpts from the Economic Development element of local comprehensive plans. It is also critical to acknowledgement the region's large military presence.

#### 1.8.1 Military Bases

Military bases are critical to coastal Georgia. Georgia is the sixth largest recipient of defense money. Two bases provide the backbone of coastal Georgia's defense-related employment.

- Fort Stewart (in Liberty County) and Hunter Army Airfield (in Chatham County) combine to be the Army's Premier Power Projection Platform on the Atlantic Coast. The estimated economic impact of the base is \$1.48 billion in FY 2006. Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield are the home of the 3rd Infantry Division, and supports over 20,000 active duty personnel and 28,600 of their family members. Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield is the largest, most effective and efficient armor training base east of the Mississippi, covering 280,000 acres including parts of Liberty, Long, Tattnall, Evans, Bryan, and Chatham counties in Southeast Georgia. The installations employ nearly 3,200 civilian workers. Hunter Army Airfield is home to the Army's longest runway on the east coast (11,375 feet) and the Truscott Air Deployment Terminal. Together these assets are capable of deploying units such as the heavy armored forces of the 3rd Infantry Division or the elite light fighters of the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment.
- Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base in Camden County houses several U.S. Navy Trident nuclear submarines and contributes approximately \$560 million a year to the local economy. The USS Florida has arrived in 2006. Two additional submarines will arrive soon. The USS Georgia is slated to arrive in 2007, and the USS Alaska is scheduled to arrive in 2008. Each submarine brings about 350 military and family members and a payroll of approximately \$17-21 million. The base is approximately 1,600 acres. The Navy employs approximately 8,000 workers (military, civilian, and contractors) at the base.

## 1.8.2 Bryan County

Presently, government is Bryan County's largest employment sector. The economic development inventory indicates that the Bryan County Board of Education employed 797 persons and Bryan County employed 460 persons in 2005. The County's largest manufacturing establishment, Hobart, employs approximately 150 workers. Bryan County also is home to hotels and motels totaling approximately 560 rooms and employing 160 persons. Most of these are concentrated within the City of Richmond Hill at Interstate 95.

Camden County recently completed an economic diversification study. Excerpts from this study are included in Section 5. The key issues and strategic goals from this study are incorporated into this strategy.

With the establishment of the Interstate Centre Industrial Park (272 acres), and the J. Dixie Harn Industrial Park (63 acres) within the city limits of Pembroke (approximately 40 percent occupied), there are significant opportunities for recruitment of industry in Bryan County.

## 1.8.3 Bulloch County

With significant population growth within Bulloch County (well over 60,000 people according to the latest census data) and its growing economy, Bulloch County is a regional trade center for commerce, education, and health care.

The County's major industrial and commercial economic development area, the Veteran's Memorial Parkway, has lured the Gateway Regional Industrial Park, and is home to major corporations such as Briggs & Stratton, Viracon, and Wal-Mart. In addition, approximately

24 percent of the Bulloch County labor force is employed by the government sector including one of the County's largest employers, Georgia Southern University.

The County's highly diversified economy provides regional shopping centers and health care centers for many of the surrounding counties. For Bulloch County to retain its quality of life advantages, the county will need to address key economic issues. One issue is the likelihood of a gradual shifting within the County's economic base as windfall tax revenues from industrial growth during the last decade are offset by increasing growth in the retail, services, and construction sectors. Another challenge is to continue industrial growth for new economic development projects in the face of intense competition from other communities in the region.

## 1.8.4 Camden County

According to the *Economic Diversification Study* completed by Georgia Tech in 2005, Camden County has an abundant available workforce. Although Census data shows an increasing number of residents commuting outside of the County and the State of Georgia for employment, the economy of the County remains strong with Service Producing Industries and Government accounting for the two largest shares of the County's employment base. Excerpts from this study are included in Section 5 of this document.

Service Producing Industries accounted for the largest share of the County's economy, representing 59 percent of employment in 2005. This is lower than what was observed for the State overall where Service Producing industries accounted for 66 percent of all jobs. However, Camden County's economy is in the process of moving from a goods producing economy (centered largely on the manufacturing industry) to a service producing industry that will cater to tourism. The second largest employment sector was Military/Government, which is largely due to the presence of the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base.

This signals an economy significantly reliant on tourism and its ability to accommodate tourists, as well as the continued dependence on the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base.

## 1.8.5 Chatham County

Chatham County has a diverse economy forming a strong business and employment base ranging from manufacturing to distribution, from tourism to military, and from healthcare to port operations and retail sectors. Though the manufacturing industry has faced some challenges in the past few years, non-manufacturing industries are continuously growing and the two are becoming more integrated.

The County is home to Hunter Army Airfield, part of the nearby Fort Stewart military base in Liberty County. Combined, the two bases employee more than 42,000 people.

Chatham County also has a strong education community that is continually growing. There are ample opportunities for specialized training in the local vocational and technical schools as well as in-house training programs in individual industries.

From the diverse group of industries, the economic vitality of the tourism industry, and the military bases that employ more than 42,000 people, Chatham County continues to see great economic opportunities in the future along with the continued growth.

## 1.8.6 Effingham County

The rapid growth in Effingham County is bringing with it changes in the type, location, and scale of economic activities in the County. Industrial development is increasing due to the availability of large tracts of land and their proximity to the Port of Savannah, interstate highways, and rail lines. In addition to the industrial sector becoming more concentrated in existing industrial parks, the health care and social services sectors are also becoming more concentrated. The Retail and service sectors are becoming more dispersed in order to serve the expanding population.

Commuting patterns have stayed relatively static over the last 15 years. The largest sectors in terms of employees in 2005 were local government (2,192), manufacturing (1,818), and retail trade (1,034).

While all major sectors have grown at a similar rate, the continued rapid growth is expected to create a major shift in the types of employment throughout the County, including business investment and employment. In addition, the County is developing new industrial parks and identifying key areas for future commercial development, such as the County's Interstate 16 interchange.

## 1.8.7 Glynn County

Glynn County's economy is in a time of transition. Traditional economic activities related to forestry and manufacturing are changing. Service industries are in high demand. Activities such as tourism, port-related industries, the construction industry, and federal employment are on the rise. Manufacturing is seeing shifts in employment due to technology gains. The Shrimping industry is facing many challenges in Glynn County and along the entire Georgia coast.

In comparison with the State of Georgia, Glynn County has relative concentrations of employment in arts, entertainment, and recreation, as well as public administration. Glynn County has lower rates of employment than the State in the industries of information, manufacturing, and transportation, warehousing and utilities.

The largest employment gains have been in education, health, and social services, and in arts, entertainment, and recreation. Growth in warehousing and distribution is expected as well, in addition to growth in assembly manufacturing.

Glynn County's employment is forecasted to grow by 45 percent, with over 15,000 new jobs over the next 25 years. Employment growth will be led by services of all kinds, including tourist-oriented services, professional services, and education and health services. Forecasts for other industries predict significant employment growth in retail, construction, and transportation and warehousing.

## 1.8.8 Liberty County

Liberty County is home to Fort Stewart. The Fort represents the largest economic force in the County and is the largest military installation east of the Mississippi River. The Fort employs over 22,000 military personnel and over 3,000 civilian personnel. Though its 280,000 acres is spread out over several counties, over 118,000 of these acres are in Liberty County.

Liberty County recently completed an economic diversification study. Excerpts from this study are included in Section 5. The key issues and strategic goals from this study are incorporated into this strategy.

While state and local government is a significant employer, retail and the service sector continue to be major employers as well. With five industrial parks, and various other diverse economic activities, Liberty County has seen total jobs in all industries increase by 2,297 jobs from mid-2001 to mid-2006.

Of the industries in the County, the limited-service eating places industry has added the most employment with 236 new jobs created in the period. The job growth in the limited-service eating places industry makes up 22.9 percent of the total number of new jobs in Liberty County, followed by full-service restaurants, building equipment contractors, and architectural and engineering services. Economic diversity is important to Liberty County's success. The large military influence on the existing economy causes significant disturbance during times of troop fluctuation.

## 1.8.9 Long County

Long County's economy has historically been driven by manufacturing, farming, and timbering. The pine forests of the region have always played an important role in the economy. Current patterns show education, health and social services, retail trade, and public administration account for over 42 percent of existing employment.

The northern tip of the County is occupied by Fort Stewart, the largest military installation east of the Mississippi River. Covering 280,000 acres (spread over several counties), the post, which includes forestlands and hunting preserves, provides many civil service jobs to local residents.

The County's transportation infrastructure and proximity to large metro areas provides economic development opportunities. The County has been proactive in the areas of planning and providing the necessary infrastructure to attract industry, such as the continued development and marketing of the Long County/Ludowici Industrial Park.

The County should continue to promote industrial development and encourage economic growth of existing developed and populated areas.

## 1.8.10 McIntosh County

Though there are few manufacturing companies in McIntosh County, the County has an industrial park that includes over 90 acres, located less than a mile from the Interstate 95-Highway 251 interchange.

In addition to manufacturing, other employment includes wholesale and retail trade, services, and farming, forestry and fishing. employment in government is also substantial, representing a far greater share of total employment than for the region overall.

McIntosh County, located midway between Savannah, Georgia and Jacksonville, Florida has access to two international airports within 60 miles, and a third smaller port facility (Brunswick) within 15 miles of the County.

McIntosh County should continue to promote its industrial park, proximity to regional transportation, and the presence of natural resources for economic activities.

## 1.8.11 Screven County

Between the garment industry, specialized bulk and roller bearing, and tourism drawn by way of U.S. Highway 301, and Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area, which includes 15,000 acres open for hunting, fishing, and farming, Screven County has some diversity in its economy. Farming is a very important part of the economy, with about \$65 million worth of crops harvested yearly, but the new economy here has become more diverse with nearly one-third of the County's employment in manufacturing. With plans for a new four-lane highway to connect Augusta and Savannah - the Savannah River Parkway, Screven County anticipates great economic opportunities and growth in the near future.

# 2 Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities

An analysis of surveys, interviews, and feedback from the steering committee exposed six key areas of issues (problems). Each issue reflects a series of components described below. The six areas are:

- Leadership Issues
- Workforce Issues
- Infrastructure Issues
- Quality of Life Issues
- Environment Issues
- Supporting Issues

The issues are listed in a general priority with leadership, workforce, and infrastructure surfacing as key issues. Quality of Life, environment, and supporting issues formed a second group, but are still very important in the economic development arena. The key areas were developed from responses to survey questions. The descriptive text provided after each key area label is defining terms drawn from the survey responses.

- **Leadership**: Critically inadequate planning for development and its impacts; Lack of regional governance structure for planning/development; Lack of proactive vision; Lack of effective pre-planning for quality growth and development resulting in sprawl; Stimulate entrepreneurship; and Support entrepreneurs to start knowledge-based companies.
- Workforce: Public education; Workforce training; Decreasing amount of available housing opportunities for workforce; Qualified workforce development (quality, training, education); Finding the right employees for companies; Improving competitiveness of manufacturing companies; Add manufacturing jobs; Improving the education level; and Poor quality of local labor force.
- Infrastructure: Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Services and Management; Transportation infrastructure; Inadequate supply of water, water usage and withdrawal issues; Inadequate infrastructure roads, water, sewer, Availability and capacity; Quality; Infrastructure to lead growth; Wastewater treatment and effluent disposal; and Inadequate sewage treatment capacity.
- Quality of Life: Maintain the existing small town-rural atmosphere as the cities grow; Increasing lack of available affordable land for needed commercial development; Rapid growth in the coastal counties; Retirees moving into the region; Clean up and develop old industrial sites; Developing new industries (supply chain, manufacturing, warehousing); Job growth in something other than the service sector; Available land for industrial uses; and Encourage development of affordable, workforce housing within proximity to employment opportunities.

- **Environment**: Need for protection/preservation of natural and historical resources; Permitting processes; Practice environmental stewardship; and Promote natural resource awareness to tourists.
- **Supporting**: Crime in urban areas; Growth of residential development is out pacing growth of commercial/industrial development, and in many areas, encroaching on once rural settings of industrial operations, thus leading to an unbalanced tax base; and Taxes and regulations.

In the same manner, the analysis surfaced three areas of opportunities for improvement. These areas describe broad areas, each containing several avenues on which to focus efforts. The three areas are:

- Growth Industry Clusters
- Regional Cooperation
- Quality of Life

The CEDS process identified several arenas that have growth potential. Growth industry clusters include:

- Ports Authorities; the Georgia Ports Authority infrastructure and related businesses; port facilities; port related manufacturing and warehouse, distribution; warehousing; associations with the Jacksonville port and related expansion opportunities.
- Military related industries and industrial facilities; military technology.
- Medical services and healthcare.
- Infrastructure capacity including soft and hard costs and activities; Development and redevelopment of water, wastewater, solid waste, and transportation infrastructure; utilization of new technologies including surfacing materials and sea water desalination.
- Tourism including encouraging expansion of appropriate commercial development and sub-industries such as eco-tourism, and recreational tourism; Rehabilitation of vacant building into potential tourism marketing museums and art centers; Developing a sustainable heritage and arts tourism market including tours, murals, and plays.
- Education including industrial design (Savannah College of Art and Design, Georgia Institute of Technology, HERTY Advanced Material Design Center); Increase knowledge based businesses; growing the knowledge base sector; European knowledge-based companies.
- Small Business Sector including increasing opportunities for small business and entrepreneurial development; Seed funding/incubation of new small businesses; new businesses in downtown areas.

A second arena for opportunity is regional cooperation. The analysis identified the following opportunities:

- Develop intergovernmental links with surrounding counties and cities to build regional marketing programs to attract business and tourism opportunities.
- Regional cooperation and execution of planning.
- Regional Transportation; transportation infrastructure; take advantage of the region's proximity to the Interstate system.
- Regional approaches to manage water/sewer/solid waste; water withdrawal access; wastewater treatment and effluent disposal.
- Targeted development corridors.
- Community-wide land management including zoning; utilize relatively inexpensive land availability to develop new industrial parks and market existing.

A third arena for opportunity is quality of life factors. The analysis identified the following opportunities:

- Ample employment opportunities exist for those who want to work. However, the opportunities may not capture students graduating from local colleges.
- Coastal communities encourage creating opportunities for improved quality of life for residents by focusing on positive attributes; e.g. small town atmosphere, available land, recreational opportunities, excellent school systems, good road infrastructure, and rural population.
- Development of environmentally friendly projects on the coast.
- Development of retirement communities.
- Enhancement of cities' travel arteries improving gateways and corridors to enhance community pride and identity.
- Partnering with educational opportunities to expand college courses and degree programs to develop and maintain strong workforces.
- Proper integration of mixed use developments tied to greenspace preservation.
- Rehabilitation of existing and historic homes as affordable workforce housing.

## 2.1 Local Workforce Investment Strategies

The following Strategy Overview was developed through a strategy planning process engaged by Coastal Workforce Services (CWS) and reported in the Strategic Plan. This section provides a broad overview of the basic goals and objectives that comprise the strategy as pursued by CWS. The goals and objectives were derived from the key findings of four previous deliverables of the strategy development process – Review of Trend Data (analysis of existing studies), Supply Analysis (analysis of the workforce), Demand Analysis (analysis of the employers), and Summary of Public Input (garnered via focus groups and an online survey).

The full description of the goals and objectives can be found in the Strategic Plan document. The Workforce Board will monitor progress and continue to set policy for the program.

The following are the goals and objectives of Coastal Workforce Services (CWS):

Goal 1: Enhance program coordination and service delivery of Coastal Workforce Services operations.

Objective 1: Address the perception that Coastal Workforce Services is not meeting the needs of all constituencies in the nine counties [Screven County is not a part of the CWS region].

Objective 2: Enhance regional coordination through the efforts of the Workforce Investment Board and the Executive Director.

Objective 3: Leverage available funding by creatively utilizing federal Workforce Investment Act funding and other potential resources.

Goal 2: Raise awareness among all regional workers and employers about Coastal Workforce Services programs and other area workforce development resources.

Objective 1: Create and implement a multi-faceted marketing plan for the work of Coastal Workforce Services and the Region's workforce development system.

Objective 2: Ensure that all constituencies throughout coastal Georgia are served with timely and accurate information.

Goal 3: Renew partnerships with regional private sector, education, training and community development partners to maximize breadth, integration and impact of Coastal Workforce Services programs; and to eliminate gaps and redundancies in regional workforce development efforts.

Objective 1: Institutionalize and strengthen the ties between all constituencies in the Region: Coastal Workforce Services, the private sector, educational resources, training programs, and community development organizations.

Goal 4: Address the primary issues facing the workforce, and respond to staffing needs of employers in the region.

Objective 1: Enhance accessibility to employment, education, and workforce development resources.

Objective 2: Raise job and career awareness among the youth of coastal Georgia.

Objective 3: Address the needs of the "hidden" workforce.

The action steps that are described in detail in the Strategic Plan will allow Coastal Workforce Services to begin the process of enhancing its operations and the workforce development system of coastal Georgia. It is important to remember that the Strategic Plan is a working document, which ideally will be revised as significant changes occur and new needs arise in the Region.

The proposed timeline for implementation is outlined in the Strategic Plan drafted by CWS.

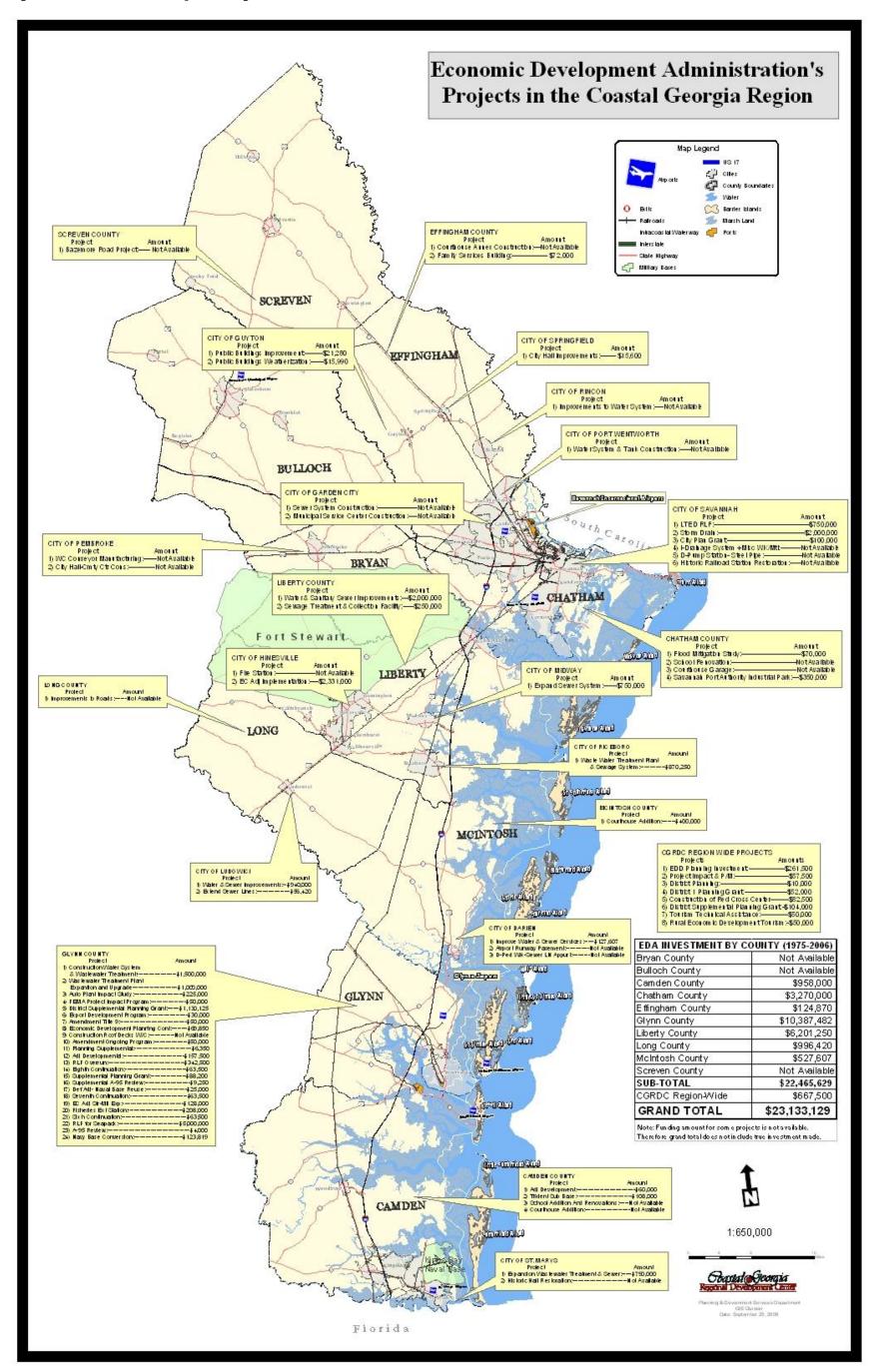
## 2.2 Development Investments

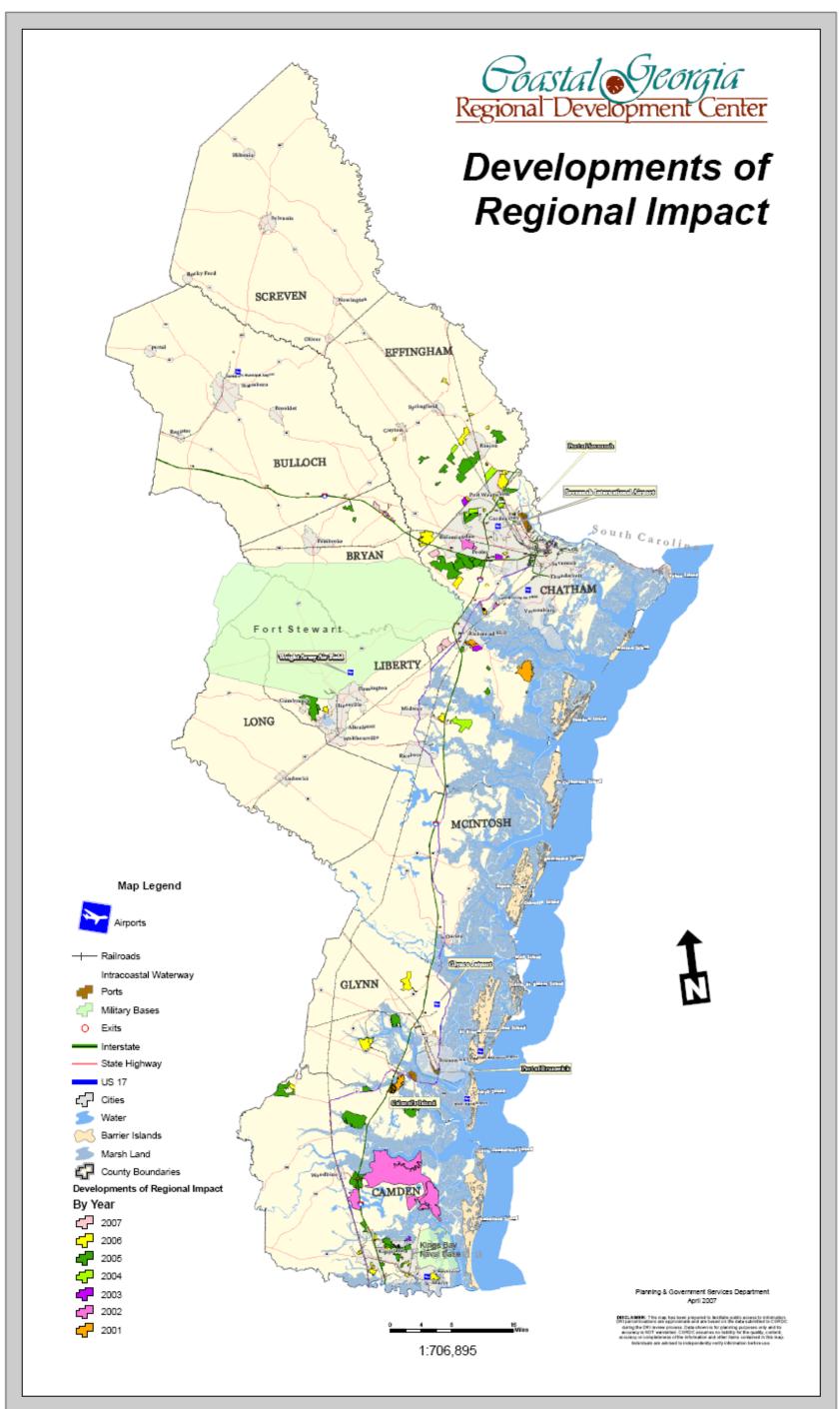
Economic Development Administration (EDA) has supported a number of projects in the Coastal Georgia RDC region over the years. The following map, Map 1, presents a summary of projects, total investments, and project locations from 1975 to 2006. The CGRDC is continually working with member jurisdictions to develop projects suitable for EDA funding.

One project underway in the Coastal Georgia RDC region is a project in Glynn County. Glynn County received \$1,000,000 to support the construction of upgrades to the South Port wastewater treatment system necessary to accommodate new and expanding businesses. This investment is part of a \$7,037,000 project that will help create 74 new jobs and generate over \$16.2 million in private investments.

Following the Economic Development Administration Projects in coastal Georgia region is a map that illustrates *Developments of Regional Impact*. This map provides information on a number of important projects in the Coastal Georgia RDC region that qualified as Developments of Regional Impact.

**Map 1: EDA Historical Projects Map** 





Map 2: Map of Developments of Regional Impact, 2001-2007.

#### 2.3 Economic Clusters

This CEDS process identified six key economic clusters for the coastal region. The clusters are:

- Transportation/Warehousing/Distribution Centers/Logistics/ Maritime Logistics (GA Tech, Port, Logistics Companies) Supply Chain Manufacturing, Ports, Interstate Corridors: I-16 and I-95, and transportation equipment manufacturing. Georgia Ports Authority and the Jacksonville, FL port.
- Military Facilities/Defense
- Tourism and recreation: hunting, fishing, etc.
- Wood Products/Agriculture/Forestry/Paper manufacturing
- Hospital/Medical services
- Commercial Fishing

These clusters represent job growth opportunities and have been primary drivers of economic growth in the past several years. The most recognized clusters are transportation/warehousing/distribution, military facilities/defense, tourism, and wood products.

In addition to the list above, a number of minor industry clusters were noted. The CEDS process identified several minor clusters for potential economic growth. They include:

- Regional airports/aeronautics
- Manufacturing of airplanes and equipment
- Music, Arts, and Movie Industry
- Education: Universities and Technical Colleges
- Information Technology
- Banking and Financial Services; Retail/Commercial Sector industries including insurance, retail, etc.; Office Service Providers
- Electronic Components
- Food Processing
- Chemical
- Construction: Commercial and Residential

# 3 Goals and Objectives—Defining Regional Expectations

One key goal of the CEDS is to guide the coastal Georgia region to attain sustainable, quality growth and create a diverse economic region. A second key goal is to support the draft guiding principle from the Coastal Comprehensive Planning process that is to guide the entire region to share in jobs and investment that are created through the integrated balance of sustainable economic development initiates. A very important consideration in the drafting of this CEDS and for future activities will be the recommendations from the Coastal Comprehensive Plan that is currently in development. The preliminary recommendations from the Coastal Comprehensive Plan are included in this section.

Specifically, the following goals and objectives will guide economic development activity in the coastal Georgia region:

Goal 1: Market the coastal Georgia region inside Georgia and outside Georgia.

Objective 1: Increase local economic development organizations participation in regional, statewide, national, and international marketing activities and organizations.

Objective 2: Develop marketing plans to address: (1) Port and related industries, (2) Military facilities, (3) Tourism, (4) Forestry products, (5) Medical services, and (6) Commercial fishing industry.

Goal 2: Encourage more intergovernmental cooperation between local governments, planning organizations, and economic development agencies including the Coastal Georgia RDC.

Objective 1: Implement a regional economic development forum for networking between coastal economic development organizations.

Objective 2: Continue involvement in implementation of the Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield Joint Land Use Study.

Objective 3: Continue involvement with The Camden Partnership and Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base.

Goal 3: Develop long-term plans to guide growth via infrastructure planning, transportation planning and corridor development, public transportation, regional water and sewer provision planning,

Objective 1: Initiate sub-regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies addressing action steps for local jurisdictions.

Objective 2: Support implementation recommendations from the Coastal Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 3: Develop a region-wide infrastructure plan encompassing transportation, water and water withdrawal, wastewater treatment, solid waste, parks and greenspace.

Objective 4: Coordinate local, state, and federal economic development planning and implementation.

Goal 4: Develop a competitive workforce by increasing educational opportunities, and implementing key actions regarding workforce changes and development. Undertake activities to develop a qualified, skilled workforce.

Objective 1: Encourage career academies and technical schools, four-year institutions, and universities in the coastal region. Participate in location and expansion planning.

Objective 2: Support the Coastal Workforce Services Strategic Plan recommendations.

Goal 5: Stimulate entrepreneurship through start-up businesses, small businesses, and expansion of larger businesses.

Objective 1: Coordinate efforts with established small and emerging business assistance organizations including SBDC, Chambers, etc.

Objective 2: Work to expand financing opportunities for small and emerging businesses through CADDA, Southeast Georgia Developers Association, SE Georgia Joint Development Authority, and others.

Goal 6: Integrate the growth of the Georgia ports into regional economic development plans to enhance economic development opportunities for the entire coast. Include consideration of the Jacksonville, Florida port.

Objective 1: Invite port representatives to participate in regional economic development forums. Objective 2: Engage port authorities and coastal communities in decision making processes regarding land use, location, and expansion, of existing facilities, decentralized facilities, and new facilities, including: (a) adjacent land use, and (b) support facilities location.

## 3.1 Regional Expectations

The overall expectation of economic development professionals in the region is that the region will continue to experience a high level of growth. Industries such as manufacturing and forestry related products will continue to transition. Significant new industries such as tourism, medical facilities, and education will play a growing role in the region.

Regional expectations include:

- Our mission should always be to enhance the quality of life for the people in our region by careful development of our abundant resources with out stymieing economic growth.
- Create a timetable for completion of actions and specific goals.
- Seek possible funding for a study of regulatory hindrances to economic growth in the coastal region.
- Develop a detailed list of community resources and partners to assist with plan implementation and development.
- Create a list of successful community examples for possible community mentoring and networking opportunities.

## 4 Community and Private Sector Participation

The Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center encourages partnership and cooperative activities throughout the region.

Partners that support the local economic viability of the coastal Georgia region include:

- Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center
- Industrial Development Authorities
- Regional Development Authorities
- Downtown Development Authorities
- Redevelopment Authorities
- City and County Governments
- Mainstreet and Better Hometown Programs
- Boards of Education
- Health Service Organizations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- Private Industrial Developers

Some of the specific organizations in the coastal area are:

- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority (Bryan, Bulloch, Candler, Chatham, Effingham, Evans, Liberty, Long, Montgomery, Screven, Tattnall, Toombs, Wheeler)
- Southeast Georgia Joint Development Authority (Glynn, Camden, McIntosh, Charlton and Brantley Counties)
- Georgia Ports Authority
- Private Industrial Developers: DP Partners (Effingham County)
- MidCoast Regional Airport at Wright Army Airfield
- Chatham and Glynn Counties (Savannah and Brunswick) with the Georgia Ports Authority
- Savannah Technical College and City of Savannah, SDRA, GTREP, and Georgia Ports Authority
- Cooperative effort between Bulloch County, Statesboro, and Chamber of Commerce
- Georgia Department of Economic Development
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Power
- Georgia Center for Site Selection Georgia Electric Membership Corp.
- Location Georgia MEAG Power Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia
- Liberty County Development Authority
- Savannah Economic Development Authority
- Brunswick and Glynn County Development Authority
- Georgia Economic Developers Association

- Camden County Joint Development Authority
- McIntosh County Development Authority
- City of Darien Downtown Development Authority

Several of these organizations participated in development of this document through responding to the CEDS survey, and commenting on the draft document.

## 5 Strategic Projects, Program, and Activities

This CEDS attempts to identify regional projects, programs, and activities designed to implement the goals and objectives stated above. Again, this is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list. The ongoing activities of economic development professional and organizations will continue to define and expand this list.

## 5.1 Strategic Activities

## 5.1.1 Coastal Comprehensive Plan

The Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee has committed an extended effort to develop and define Guiding Principles for Economic Development in the coastal Region. At the time of this writing (August 2007), the Coastal Comprehensive Plan document is a working draft that has not been released to the public. The information included here is in its **preliminary** form due to the critical interaction of the activity of the Coastal Comprehensive Planning effort and this CEDS planning effort. The Advisory Committee defined two categories under economic development:

- Business and Industry
- Tourism

Under the Business and Industry category the Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee developed the following:

## 5.1.1.1 Guiding Principles: Business and Industry

Economic development is closely tied to our coastal resources, both through the port-related activities of our coastal waterways and the natural, historic, and cultural resources which drive the tourism industry. Our (Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee) vision is that economic development will be successful through integrated land and water resource management, transportation, and infrastructure decisions which protect and promote our coastal resources.

Our goal is that the entire region shares in jobs and investment that are created through sustainable development initiatives.

#### **Strategies**

- Promote distribution of business and industry across the region.
- Develop a regional economic development land use plan to identify appropriate sites for manufacturing, distribution, etc., recognizing the differences between communities.
- Due to the importance of the Georgia Ports Authority, create a distribution centers
  master plan to identify locations within the region best suited for distribution based
  on the existing or programmed transportation network.

- Coordinate with the Georgia Ports authority to identify needs of the GPA and identify
  mechanism for the economic development industry to strength the GPA in the fields
  of logistics, distribution, and workforce development.
- Conduct an assessment of assets and needs across the region, understanding the variations of differences in communities.
- Research and investigate ways to share costs and benefits across jurisdictional lines.
- Coordinate business and industry needs with the educational entities, including K-12 and higher education, so educational programs will provide the appropriate skills for the workforce.
- Promote the retention of strong military presence to promote economic stability and to provide a high-quality workforce.
- Recognize and support traditional industries undergoing changes to serve emerging markets (i.e., maintain Silva culture to support biofuels production).
- Promote businesses which will support the continuation of natural resource-based industries, such as Silva culture, agriculture, fisheries, etc. in order to reduce the conversion of these lands into developed areas.

#### **Regional Coordination and Cooperation**

- Coordinate federal, state, and local economic development funding programs and initiatives that affect the coast.
- Promote and encourage coordination between economic development agencies and educational institutions to provide appropriate workforce training.
- Promote and support the traditional coastal industries through coordination among federal, state, and local tourism and economic development initiatives and funding opportunities.

#### **Suggested Additions**

- Create an education task force to work with local school systems, universities, and technical schools to identify mechanisms for increased student performance.
- Economic development initiatives encompass consideration of current and future needs for housing, infrastructure, and natural resource protection.
- Balance recruitment of jobs with recruitment of clean, high-tech (Knowledge Based Businesses), growth industries.
- Encourage the recruitment of industries which are not major water-consumers.

Under the Tourism category, the Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee developed the following draft statements:

## **5.1.1.2** Guiding Principles: Tourism

Economic development is closely tied to our coastal resources, both through the port-related activities of our coastal waterways and the natural, historic, and cultural resources which

drive the tourism industry. Our vision is that economic development will be promoted through integrated land use, transportation, and infrastructure decisions which protect and promote our coastal resources.

Our goal is that the entire region shares in healthy and productive balanced economic development which recognizes the uniqueness of each community and supports equitable responsibilities for the services and benefits of economic development activities.

#### **Strategies**

- Promote balanced, cooperative, and coordinated cultural and resource-based tourism inherent to the coastal region.
- Promote and develop incentives to enhance and grow regional cultural tourism.
- Promote and develop incentives to enhance and grow regional eco-tourism.
- Develop and promote a regional tourism and marketing strategy.
- Promote Southern Passages (US 17) as a scenic route; integrating the ongoing efforts of the Coastal Georgia Greenway (coastal GAgreenway.org), Georgia's Altamaha Scenic Byway, and Georgia's Coastal Birding Trail.
- Create a corridor management plan along I-95.
- Promote consistent signage at all interstate interchanges.
- Balance recreational uses of coastal resources with appropriate protection of the environment on which our economy and quality of life depends.
- Enhance natural, historic, and cultural core areas for recreation, public education, and tourist attractions as appropriate within the protection mission. Promote these areas for heritage tourism.
- Coordinate federal, state, and local tourism and economic development funding and initiatives.
- Encourage local government to actively pursue elimination of junkyards and other eyesores, especially along major thoroughfares and gateways.
- Work with DECD on coastal project development and anti-litter campaigns.

## 5.1.2 Economic Diversification of Bryan County, Georgia

Bryan County recently conducted an economic diversification report. The report identifies five key issues and associated recommended strategic goals. The key issues and strategic goals are included here.

- 1. Key Issue: Bryan County is geographically separated into two distinct communities by the physical presence of Fort Stewart.
  - 1.1. Strategic Goal: Focus on strengthening the foundation for county wide collaboration through relation building efforts.
- 2. Key Issue: Experiencing significant growth pressures, Bryan County is at risk for disconnected, patchwork, and mismanaged development.

- Strategic Goal: Focus on developing higher standards and expectations for development.
- 3. Key Issue: Given Bryan County's favorable competitive position, the county can afford to be strategic in its choices.
  - 3.1. Strategic Goal: Focus on industries that are most suitable for Bryan County and offer the greatest opportunity for economic prosperity and lowest risk for community degradation.
- 4. Key Issue: As Bryan County's economic base is expanding significantly with a mixture of large industrial firms and small-to-medium sized businesses, it is critical to create programs to help boost the competitiveness of these employers.
  - 4.1. Strategic Goal: Focus on creating an effective business and retention program to support businesses of all sizes.
- 5. Key Issue: While Bryan County is excelling in certain aspects of workforce development, greater work to better prepare current and future workers for the jobs of today and tomorrow is required to be competitive in the global economy.
  - 5.1. Strategic Goal: Focus on aligning training and education for youth and adults with the skills required by current and future industry.

These issues and goals have been factored into the overall recommendations for action in this document.

## 5.1.3 Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia

In the economic diversification plan, the Georgia Tech team recommends the following strategic goals for Camden County for addressing the community's most urgent issues relating to the economic diversification and quality growth of the county and its three cities of Kingsland, St. Marys and Woodbine. Reaching these goals will require a county-wide effort, involving multiple organizations. What is critical to recognize is that these goals are intertwined as they relate to economic development strategies that support or build upon each other; the success of reaching one goal will depend on the effectiveness of efforts to reach another. Therefore, it is very important to consider these initiatives as part and of ongoing county-wide coordination and partnership.

The key issues and strategic goals from the strategy are listed below.

- 1. Key Issue: Camden County appears to have made great strides in collaboration among local economic development organizations and local government entities. However, many efforts happening within the community do not appear to be well-coordinated.
  - 1.1. Strategic Goal: Continue efforts to collaborate and work together to develop a cohesive focus. The effort to develop and implement the community's economic diversification plan should have ongoing county-wide participation.
- 2. Key Issue: Economic diversification is very critical for the long-term health of Camden County's economy. The community is heavily reliant on its military base, making the county very vulnerable to any adverse impact on the base's operations. To reduce this risk, Camden County must diversify its economy by recruiting and growing businesses

that serve external markets (outside of Camden County), such as suppliers to industries in the Jacksonville and Brunswick MSAs.

- 2.1. Strategic Goal: Focus on key industries to develop, based upon Camden's assets, proximity to major markets, and community vision for higher quality industries, and market to those industries strategically and aggressively.
- 3. Key Issue: New development within the county has not reflected the vision, goals, and objectives of the community.
  - 3.1. Strategic Goal: Ensure that development regulations, zoning changes, and permitting decisions are consistent with the community's vision and goals, and concurrent with plans for the infrastructure and educational facility provisions articulated in the planning documents.
- 4. Key Issue: Recent development has not balanced residential expansion with economic development. If current trends continue, Camden County may need to expand services to meet the needs of its residents.
  - 4.1. Strategic Goal: Evaluate the implications of development patterns on Camden County's tax base, environment, and ability to maintain a desirable quality of life, and diversify development efforts and land use planning strategies accordingly.
- 5. Key Issue: Water and wastewater infrastructure provision is following instead of directing development.
  - 5.1. Strategic Goal: Develop a comprehensive master plan that phases the expansion of water and wastewater infrastructure to support economic development and redevelopment goals.
- 6. Key Issue: Natural, cultural, and historic resources are disconnected.
  - 6.1. Develop a green infrastructure network that connects community amenities for environmental and social benefits.
- 7. Key Issue: The existing transportation system lacks connectivity and transportation options.
  - 7.1. Strategic Goal: Create road placement and design standards that allow for multiple transportation modes and a transit system that supports significant originations and destinations, as well as special events.
- 8. Key Issue: Key corridors and interchanges are underperforming.
  - 8.1. Strategic Goal: Enact corridor and interchange management plans that enhance community identity, provide mobility options, and encourage new development and redevelopment that is consistent with the community's vision.
- 9. Key Issue: Camden County's potential for economic development and diversification depends upon its ability to develop a knowledge-based workforce, which can best be accomplished through improving the coordination and collaboration of its workforce development organizations and expanding efforts in key targeted areas.
  - 9.1. Strategic Goal: Join forces to ensure that workforce development is demonstrably excellent at all levels, from early childhood through adulthood.

- 10. Key Issue: Although entrepreneurship represents a significant opportunity for economic diversification, area stakeholders have identified several entrepreneur and small-business needs that are not currently being met in Camden County, and the community lacks a unified approach for addressing these needs and supporting future needs. In addition, although Camden's existing business and industry needs are reported to be met well overall, stakeholders identified some unmet needs.
  - 10.1. Strategic Goal: Diversify and expand economic development efforts to foster, nurture, and support entrepreneurs, and significantly expand efforts to support existing business and industries overall.
- 11. Key Issue: Tourism is recognized as one of Camden's greatest economic development opportunities as the community is rich in assets. However, Camden is not reaching its full potential for optimizing these opportunities.
  - 11.1. Strategic Goal: Strengthen tourism promotion and development efforts to enable Camden to further capitalize on its many historic, cultural, and ecological assets.
- 12. Key Issue: Camden County offers a key gateway to Georgia's coast from Florida, and its coastal lifestyle is one of its leading assets for attracting future business, tourism, and residential investors.
  - 12.1. Strategic Goal: Further leverage Camden County's coastal lifestyle and related ecological and historical attributes as key drivers for future marketing plans and efforts.

The above key issues and goals were taken from the Camden County Economic Diversification Strategy and are folded into the recommendations of this CEDS.

## 5.1.4 Liberty County Economic Diversification Strategy

Liberty County recently completed a joint economic diversification strategy for the City of Hinesville, Liberty County Development Authority, and Liberty County. The Implementation goals and actions are included below. The goals are grouped into six areas:

- 1. Economic Development Coordination and Organization
- 2. Inventory and Infrastructure
- 3. Workforce Development
- 4. Quality of Life
- 5. Housing
- 6. Economic Development Marketing

These groups align with the six key areas identified earlier in Section 2. The goals and actions included below are excerpted from the strategy.

- 1. Economic Development Coordination and Organization
  - 1.1. Goal #1: To ensure all local government officials are included in decision making for County-wide strategies.

- 1.1.1. Action 1: Renew communication and information sharing among the various local governments with a monthly/quarterly breakfast forum.
- 1.1.2. Action 2: Include all local jurisdictions on Development Authority issues, giving each voting rights.
- 1.1.3. Action 3: Create E-mail listserve that includes all key local government officials and stakeholders to ensure all parties are updated on progress.
- 1.2. Goal #2: To improve coordination with regional and state economic development entities.
  - 1.2.1. Action 1: Share target industry information with Georgia DEcD, Coastal Georgia RDC and Georgia Power EDO to increase outside awareness of local efforts.
  - 1.2.2. Action 2: Institute a regular meeting/information session with the various economic development organizations to exchange ideas and share information.
  - 1.2.3. Action 3: Coordinate with the Georgia DEcD and Coastal Georgia RDC to develop joint marketing/advertising opportunities.
- 1.3. Goal #3: To foster better relationships with real estate brokers.
  - 1.3.1. Action 1: Increase awareness of Liberty County through continued communication with local and regional real estate brokers, providing information on the progress of recruitment efforts on a regular basis.
  - 1.3.2. Action 2: Provide marketing information to national site selection consultants through scheduled mailings.
  - 1.3.3. Action 3: Evaluate the brokerage agreement with CB Richard Ellis annually and adjust accordingly to meet changing needs and broker performance.
- 1.4. Goal #4: To create partnership opportunities with the private sector to attract employment-generating businesses.
  - 1.4.1. Action 1: Work with local and regional financial institutions to provide creative financing options for new and start-up businesses.
  - 1.4.2. Action 2: Explore the potential to use revenue sharing/cost sharing initiatives with private developers and state agencies, such as the use of the Georgia Equity Fund.
- 2. Inventory and Infrastructure
  - 2.1. Goal #1: To Improve and enhance Tradeports East and West to be world-class business parks.
    - 2.1.1. Action 1: Continue to focus development in Tradeport East, reducing the upfront infrastructure costs related to having two parks active at one time.
    - 2.1.2. Action 2: Establish a public-private partnership to develop speculative warehouse/manufacturing space in Tradeport East totaling 200,000 SF to 300,000 SF (in one building) that is subdividable in 50,000 SF increments.

- 2.1.3. Action 3: Cultivate relationship with public/private partnership developer to maintain opportunities for future speculative development in Tradeport East.
- 2.1.4. Action 4: Build reserves from revenues generated in Tradeport East to purchase additional land and install infrastructure in Tradeport West.
- 2.2. Goal #2: To develop the Wright Army Airfield joint-use industrial/research park.
  - 2.2.1. Action 1: Study the cost/benefit of expanding one or both of the 5,000 foot runways to a minimum of 6,500 feet to accommodate larger cargo and jet planes.
  - 2.2.2. Action 2: Study the cost/benefits of improving the infrastructure and facilities at the airport to standards commensurate with industrial recruitment and corporate travelers.
  - 2.2.3. Action 3: Build the Highway 94 bypass connecting the airport to Highway 84 for direct access to Tradeports East and West/Interstate 95.
  - 2.2.4. Action 4: Work with Fort Stewart and/or the Department of Defense to cultivate the industrial and heavy equipment repair cluster at the airfield to serve both military and civilian users.
  - 2.2.5. Action 5: Coordinate recruitment efforts of non-military businesses between the City of Hinesville, Liberty County and the Liberty County Development Authority.
- 2.3. Goal #3: To achieve 100% occupancy in the remaining industrial parks within the County.
  - 2.3.1. Action 1: Establish a public-private partnership to develop a speculative industrial building totaling 50,000 SF
  - 2.3.2. in Midway Industrial Park and one 20,000 SF to 40,000 SF in Hinesville Technology Park, potentially with the same developer as in the Tradeport East deal.
  - 2.3.3. Action 2: Perform a market analysis for the former Liberty County Airport site, identifying opportunities to expand the Hinesville Technology Park.
  - 2.3.4. Action 3: Improve signage and entrances of all industrial/business parks to bolster a sense of place for the parks in a manner consistent with the branding effort currently underway in the County.
- 3. Workforce Development
  - 3.1. Goal #1: To provide business-specific training programs to corporate residents of Liberty County.
    - 3.1.1. Action 1: Establish a workforce advisory committee comprised of local officials, education providers and industry leaders to address training and workforce needs in the County.
    - 3.1.2. Action 2: Meet with local business and industry leaders to identify workforce training needs.

- 3.1.3. Action 3: Enhance relationships with Georgia Tech-Savannah to provide additional training programs for technical jobs at the Savannah Tech Liberty campus.
- 3.1.4. Action 4: Work with industry leaders to build regional workforce capacity in emerging target industries.
- 3.1.5. Action 5: Establish and sponsor semi-annual "industry cluster roundtable" groups to strengthen relationships and cooperation among target industry leaders.
- 3.2. Goal #2: To strengthen high school/continuing education vocational training providers.
  - 3.2.1. Action 1: Improve the coordination and collaboration between the high school administration and public, private and higher education training providers.
  - 3.2.2. Action 2: Utilize Work Keys skills assessment testing for students and incumbent workers to help determine a career path and assess skill needs.
  - 3.2.3. Action 3: Develop a comprehensive advertising program to promote training offerings.
  - 3.2.4. Action 4: Implement workplace learning classes on professionalism/workplace behavior to supplement technical training classes.
  - 3.2.5. Action 5: Enforce a unified behavior/dress code policy for vocational classes taught at the high school.
  - 3.2.6. Action 6: Update course offerings based on the interests and needs of the high school students, maintaining a flexible curriculum that compliments local business needs as well.
- 3.3. Goal #3: To implement and enhance life skills training for underemployed/unemployable laborers.
  - 3.3.1. Action 1: Offer reduced rate child care services for low-income households.
  - 3.3.2. Action 2: Provide late-hours/weekend child care services.
  - 3.3.3. Action 3: Coordinate access to job training and job placement with rehabilitation programs.
- 4. Quality of Life
  - 4.1. Goal #1: To bolster the image of Hinesville and Liberty County through strategic investments.
    - 4.1.1. Action 1: Implement the recommendations to improve Highway 84 from Walthursville to the Interstate.
    - 4.1.2. Action 2: Follow through with the recommendations made to improve and revitalize downtown Hinesville.
    - 4.1.3. Action 3: Install consistent signage and wayfinding throughout the County, guiding residents and tourists to key recreation, employment and entertainment venues.

- 4.2. Goal #2: To improve and enhance recreation and entertainment amenities within the County.
  - 4.2.1. Action 1: Continue to market and grow the annual Liberty festival, adding new attractions and events to generate greater interest region-wide such as concerts.
  - 4.2.2. Action 2: Investigate the opportunity to open access to the waterfront for fishing and/or recreation, potentially partnering with a neighboring county to share costs/find the most appropriate site.
  - 4.2.3. Action 3: Continue to enhance marketing materials and efforts for local cultural amenities such as the Midway museum and Heritage Trail.
  - 4.2.4. Action 4: Investigate the potential to develop a public golf course on the East side of Interstate 95 to complement the development of the private course as part of the Hampton Island development.

#### 5. Housing

- 5.1. Goal #1: To improve the condition of existing housing stock.
  - 5.1.1. Action 1: Increase and make more consistent the enforcement of existing housing codes to reduce blight and maintenance issues for all housing developments.
  - 5.1.2. Action 2: Enhance financing options to assist low- and moderate-income households in maintenance and repair of their housing, especially senior homeowners.
  - 5.1.3. Action 3: Coordinate and implement "community clean-up days" for local charities, churches and outreach programs to assist neighborhoods in removing trash and debris.
- 5.2. Goal #2: To promote the development of safe, quality housing for all income levels.
  - 5.2.1. Action 1: Support continued development of housing within close proximity to Fort Stewart to attract personnel to live within Liberty County.
  - 5.2.2. Action 2: Encourage the continued development of high-end housing east of Interstate.
  - 5.2.3. Action 3: Provide performance-based incentives for developers to build quality worker-class housing as part of larger subdivisions.
  - 5.2.4. Action 4: Enhance homeownership programs to assist low- and moderate-income households in areas such as home maintenance, financing and mortgage assistance, and budgeting and bill-paying.
- Economic Development and Marketing
  - 6.1. Goal #1: To redesign existing recruitment materials to present a more relevant, uniform message.
    - 6.1.1. Action 1: Update images in existing material to show most recent progress in each park, as necessary.

- 6.1.2. Action 2: Create more visually relevant mapping [1] that more clearly shows the location of Liberty County within a regional context, and [2] better details the local and regional amenities available to businesses that locate in Liberty County (Port, Interstate...).
- 6.1.3. Action 3: Develop a one-page incentive sheet that provides brief explanations of all incentives available in Liberty County.
- 6.1.4. Action 4: Develop uniform inserts for each industrial park using same design and level of detail for each. Materials should prominently show Liberty County as the focus rather than state or private interests such as Georgia Power.
- 6.1.5. Action 5: Be consistent with new branding when creating images and layout.
- 6.2. Goal #2: To develop additional materials to supplement existing efforts.
  - 6.2.1. Action 1: Create industry-specific marketing materials for target industries, detailing the advantages and amenities offered by Liberty County
  - 6.2.2. Action 2: Explore the potential for performance-based incentives for developers to assist in attracting target industries.
  - 6.2.3. Action 3: Develop a high-quality, concise brochure for exhibitions/conferences and direct mailings that carries the message of the County
- 6.3. Goal #3: To continue comprehensive targeted advertising through promotion articles.
  - 6.3.1. Action 1: Maintain the annual advertising in industry trade magazines and periodicals utilizing updated marketing materials.
  - 6.3.2. Action 2: Seek out industry-specific trade organizations that complement target industries to purchase advertising space in their periodicals.
  - 6.3.3. Action 3: Sponsor annual conferences of trade groups and target industry events.
- 6.4. Goal #4: To implement a direct mail campaign for target industries.
  - 6.4.1. Action 1: Assign contacts to specific staff members to ensure communication is consistent throughout the recruiting process. Utilize City/County elected officials and staff as necessary.
  - 6.4.2. Action 2: Partner with local industry leaders to develop a networking program to assist potential targets in receiving information and developing local connections with the industrial community.
- 6.5. Goal #5: To organize and develop the region's emerging industry clusters.
  - 6.5.1. Action 1: Provide tours, information sessions and activities for specific key companies to retain them in Liberty County.
  - 6.5.2. Action 2: Invite selected industry leaders to meet and greet events to develop personal and professional Connections.
  - 6.5.3. Action 3: Organize hospitality, dining, and recreational events that showcase the "best of Liberty" to potential target companies.

- 6.5.4. Action 4: Establish and sponsor semi-annual "industry cluster roundtable" groups to strengthen relationships and cooperation among target industry leaders.
- 6.6. Goal #6: To ensure the Development Authority has the financial and technical means to effectively implement these efforts.
  - 6.6.1. Action 1: Access and augment the municipal staff within the Development Authority to ensure industry targets and all marketing/recruitment efforts are sufficiently staffed
  - 6.6.2. Action 2: Provide continued training for staff to improve technical skill and market knowledge.
  - 6.6.3. Action 3: Investigate the potential to provide cross-jurisdiction partnerships where staffing for the Development Authority is a shared position where 50% of the day is spent on Authority work and 50% is on City/County work.

These are the goals and actions are taken from the Economic Diversification Strategy for Liberty County.

## 5.2 Suggested/Proposed Projects

This section contains a partial listing of suggested and proposed projects reported by the ten counties and other jurisdictions. Some counties did not respond to a request for information.

#### Potential Projects:

#### **Regional Projects**

- Sub-Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies clearly defining local action steps.
- Initiation of a Coastal Georgia Economic Development forum.
- Develop a list of Brownfield redevelopment sites.

#### **Bryan County**

- Focus on strengthening the foundation for county-wide collaboration through relationship building efforts.
- Focus on developing higher standards and expectations for development.
- Focus on industries that are most suitable for Bryan County and offer the greatest opportunity for economic prosperity and lowest risk for community degradation.
- Focus on creating an effective business and retention program to support businesses of all sizes.
- Focus on aligning training and education for youth and adults with the skills required by current and future industry.

#### **Bulloch County**

- Gateway Regional Industrial Park: infrastructure for new anchor industry.
- Bulloch County Inland Container Depot: Infrastructure, container matching facility for trucks, possible rail line to relieve empty container storage at the Port of Savannah.
- Bulloch County's emergence as a population, economic and educational center in the region should be given greater recognition.

#### Camden County

#### St. Marys

- Waterfront Pavilion Expansion 2008.
- Multi-Purpose Theater/Convention Center 2008.
- Water/sewer expansion to north end of County to accommodate residential growth.

#### **Chatham County**

No projects submitted.

#### **Effingham County**

- Interstate 16 Logistics Center: 2008; Infrastructure development (water, wastewater treatment, road work).
- Research Forest Business Park: 2010; Road and rail work.

#### Glynn County

- Two new industrial parks I-95 and near airport.
- Port expansion at Colonel's Island.
- Existing manufacturing expansions Georgia Pacific.
- Joint Water and Sewer Commission.
- New mixed use projects Liberty Harbor.

#### City of Brunswick

- Newcastle Street Redevelopment.
- Highway 17 Redevelopment.
- Norwich Street Redevelopment.
- Bay Street Redevelopment.
- Waterfront Redevelopment.
- Wi-FI grid for the city.
- Brownfield Redevelopment.

#### Liberty County

- Tradeport West Infrastructure. Provision of road, water, sewer, and drainage systems to service Tradeport West Industrial Park. Approximately \$13,000,000 if application is made during calendar 2007 and greater if made in 2008 or later.
- Infrastructure projects that might arise as new prospects consider our area and have requirement of which we are currently unaware.

#### Long County

- Working on trying to get two new large companies to come to the Industrial Park.
- Working on the Train Depot, doing some restructuring and other work. It will become a visitors/welcome center as well as the offices for the Chamber.
- Doing some work on the schools. Five-year plan to restructure both the middle school and high school. Also making some additions to the new elementary school.

#### McIntosh County

Continue to promote the McIntosh County industrial park.

#### City of Darien

- Regional Conference Center on the Darien River Waterfront.
- Regional Landfill in McIntosh County.
- Sea Water Desalination Plant.
- Regional Distribution/Logistics Park/Airfield Complex Located vicinity of I-95 and Hwy 251 interchange.
- Rail line reactivation/rail bridge/spur: Tie Ports of Savannah and Brunswick by reactivating the old CSX line from Richmond Hill -Riceboro - Verett.

#### Screven County:

- Regional Transportation System.
- Industrial Park and Spec Building.

## 5.3 Vital Projects

#### Regional projects

• Initiate a region-wide economic development forum to champion economic development in the region and serve as liaison to State legislators in Atlanta.

#### **Bryan County**

- Focus on strengthening the foundation for county-wide collaboration through relationship building efforts.
- Focus on developing higher standards and expectations for development.
- Focus on industries that are most suitable for Bryan County and offer the greatest opportunity for economic prosperity and lowest risk for community degradation.
- Focus on creating an effective business and retention program to support businesses of all sizes.
- Focus on aligning training and education for youth and adults with the skills required by current and future industry.

#### **Bulloch County**

Anchor Industry for Gateway Industrial Park .

#### Camden County

- A regional implementation strategy addressing specific actions for each city.
- Develop an impact strategy and actionable steps to participate in the growth of the Jacksonville port expansion.

#### St. Marys

- Riverview Hotel remodeling and expansion.
- Remodeling of dilapidated businesses /buildings on Riverfront (St. Marys Street).
- Streetscape project Osborne Street.

#### Kingsland

- Development of a hotel/convention center to attract more meetings to the Kingsland area.
- Creation of way finding signage plan to help direct tourists through the City and County.
- Mapping scenic and natural resources throughout the City and County as part of a greenprint plan to help protect the scenic beauty of our community.
- Revitalization of the downtown to include new heritage marketing opportunities.

#### **Chatham County**

No projects submitted.

#### **Effingham County**

- 1,750 acre public/private development for logistics park.
- Development of Effingham Parkway.
- Exit 148 Interchange refurbishments on Interstate 16.
- Development of the I-16 Meldrim tract.

#### Glynn County

- Career Academy to address high school drop out rate and provide seamless workforce training coordination.
- Distribution Park on I-95.
- Water and Sewer infrastructure upgrades and expansion.
- Tourism product development (Jekyll Island and St. Simons Island).

#### City of Brunswick

- Implementation of recommendations from the updated Blueprint Brunswick Master Plan study.
- Development of the Brunswick/Glynn Public Transportation initiative.
- Implementation of redevelopment of the waterfront.

#### Liberty County

Sewer treatment facility to serve designated water/sewer deliver area, design
work on Tradeport West infrastructure, and completion of MidCoast Regional
Airport terminal and runway.

#### Long County

No projects submitted.

#### McIntosh County

#### Darien

- Reactivation of airfield with enhanced capabilities.
- Annexation of property for industrial park.
- Development of the ecotourism industry.

#### Screven County:

- Implementation of the local comprehensive plan.
- Consider implications of the Coastal Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop a regional transportation system.
- Completion of the industrial park.
- Marketing Screven County and cities for economic growth.

Coastal	Georgia	Comprehensive	Economic I	Development	Strategy
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**Table 6: Vital Projects: Future Projects** 

CEDS Goal/ Objective	EDA Category	EDA Priority	Agency	EDA Funding	Estimated Private Investment	Describe the EDA project
	Construction/Non sudden severe	Support Long- term, Coordinated, Collaborative Economic Regionalism	Effingham County Development Authority	\$2,000,000	40,000,000	Infrastructure for the creation of a new business park west of Rincon
	Technical Assistance	Encourage Entrepreneurship	City of Savannah	\$50,000	\$10,000	Facilitate and empower minority job creation; business entrepreneurship; Lisa Sundrella; City of Savannah
	Construction/Non sudden severe	Encourage Entrepreneurship	Long County	\$100,000	\$200,000	An expanding distribution center relocating to the Long County Industrial Park- Infrastructure to new facility.
	Construction/Non sudden severe	Support Long- term, Coordinated, Collaborative Economic Regionalism	Camden County	\$3,000,000	\$10,000,000	500 acre business park; infrastructure
	Construction/Non sudden severe	Support Long- term, Coordinated, Collaborative Economic Regionalism	Bryan County	\$1,500,000	\$4,000,000	Infrastructure to a manufacturing and distribution company
	Construction/Non sudden severe	Support Long- term, Coordinated, Collaborative Economic Regionalism	Glynn County	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	Hwy 99and 341; Sterling Industrial Area; extend water and sewer to existing businesses,
	Construction/Non sudden severe	Support Long- term, Coordinated, Collaborative Economic	Liberty County Development Authority	\$2,000,000	\$23,000,000	Construct 3,000,000 gpd wastewater treatment plant to allow industrial/office development of 1,700 acres within Tradeport East Development Park as well as residential and retail/commercial development within a total 14,000 acre water/sewer service delivery area adjoining the park. Builds

	Regionalism				on the development already initiated in Tradeport East by an initial 200,000 gpd wastewater treatment allocation from the City of Midway which has resulted in 550 jobs in the park and generated increased desire for more industrial, office, residential, retail and commercial development within the park and adjoining area for which no wastewater treatment is currently available.
Construction/Non sudden severe	Enable BRAC- Impacted	Liberty County	\$2,000,000	\$10,000,000	Construct road into MidCoast Regional Airport at Wright Army Air Field through new development park currently
sudden severe	Communities to	Development			being planned adjacent to the air field. Will facilitate
	Transition	Authority			increased development of Ft. Stewart and the surrounding
					multi-county area by providing industrial and office area on
					Ft. Stewart for military and civilian contractors needing immediate access to Ft. Stewart and the joint airport.
Construction/Non	Support Long-	McIntosh	\$1,000,000	\$7,000,000	Assist locating a modular home manufacturing facility into
sudden severe	term,	County			the McIntosh County Industrial Park with funding support
	Coordinated,	Development			of infrastructure installation necessary for the project.
	Collaborative	Authority,			
	Economic	Darien,			
~	Regionalism	Georgia	****	****	
Strategy	Support Long-	McIntosh	\$150,000	\$150,000	Strategic planning for the addition of a new interchange on
	term,	County			I-95 at mile marker 52 in McIntosh County Georgia.
	Coordinated,	Development			
	Collaborative	Authority,			
	Economic	Darien,			
	Regionalism	Georgia			

#### 6 Plan of Action

This section identifies key actions that are needed in the coastal area to further economic development prosperity. The goals are the result of analysis and input from the CEDS Committee and respondents to the survey.

#### **Key Actions:**

- Market the coastal Georgia region inside Georgia and outside Georgia.
- Encourage more intergovernmental cooperation between local governments, planning organizations, and economic development agencies including the Coastal Georgia RDC.
- Develop long-term plans to lead growth through infrastructure planning, transportation planning and corridor development, public transportation, regional water and sewer provision planning,
- Develop a competitive workforce through increased educational opportunities, and implement key actions regarding workforce changes and development.
- Stimulate entrepreneurship through start-up businesses, small businesses, and expansion of larger businesses.
- Integrate the growth of the Georgia Ports into regional economic development plans to enhance economic development opportunities for the entire coast. Include consideration of the Jacksonville, Florida port.

#### Key Goals:

- To lead the coastal Georgia region to attain sustainable, quality growth and create a diverse economic region.
- To support the draft guiding principle from the Coastal Comprehensive Planning process to lead the entire region to share in jobs and investment that are created through the integrated balance of sustainable economic development initiates.

#### **Regional Activities:**

- Encourage local comprehensive plans and protective zoning to include locational plans to identify appropriate sites for manufacturing, distribution, etc., recognizing the communities.
- While recognizing the importance of the regional port infrastructure and acknowledging strengths of each, support a target industry master plan to identify locations best suited for various strategies based on the existing or programmed transportation network.
- Work with local governments, Downtown Development Authorities, etc. to create
  incentives for downtown revitalization, job creation, and location of business and
  offices within downtown areas.

- Review economic development plans created by local or regional development authorities for consistency with the regional economic development and locational plans.
- Assist with the location of distribution centers not identified in the regional plan
- Plan for public infrastructure including affordable, workforce Housing
- Assist in developing tourism-based activities consistent with the regional plan.
- Promote natural resource awareness programs to tourists.
- Monitor regional tourism statistics and impacts.
- Maintain up-to-date information on land use and planning efforts in the cities and counties.
- Develop long-term plans to deal with the needs of the influx of older people locating in the coastal Georgia area.
- Develop a health services plan.
- Development of education/training opportunities for future workers.
- Create specific plans to develop adequate infrastructure for growth.
- Conduct educational effort to lead implementation of key actions regarding workforce changes and development.
- Stimulate entrepreneurship and startup companies.
- Planning and promotion of business sectors that play off of Port's growth
- Develop a transportation plan and transportation infrastructure funding (plan transportation in and out of the region, its counties, and cities); including specific plans to create adequate infrastructure for growth; Transportation/Corridor development, public transportation options
- Monitor public access to water and local public access strategies; Monitor conditions of public beaches (access, beach erosion, etc.)
- Encourage more intergovernmental cooperation between local governments and the CGRDC
- The coastal region will consider becoming a "Work Ready Region"

## 6.1 Integration with Georgia's Economic Development Priorities

The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) concurs with this document. A memorandum stating concurrence is included in Section 8, Appendix. Coastal Georgia RDC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy will be shared with the State of Georgia GDEcD Regional Project Manager to further collaborative efforts. The CEDS committee made every effort to cooperate and integrate this CEDS with the State of Georgia's economic priorities.

The Website for the Georgia Department of Economic Development is: http://www.georgia.org. A variety of services and resources can be found at this site.

Another source of assistance is the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The DCA Website is: http://www.dca.state.ga.us.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development offers a variety of programs to support and encourage economic development across the State of Georgia.

#### DCA forwarded the following statement:

"The Office of Planning & Quality Growth has not yet had a discussion with EDA staff about coordinating the CEDS with our proposed/draft new Regional Planning Requirements. I definitely think it's a good idea for us to talk to them and seek an agreement like we had before, as soon as we've had a chance to revise the regional planning standards to reflect outcomes of the Coastal Comprehensive Planning process - so probably sometime this fall (Fall 2007).

We might also encourage CGRDC support of the State's economic development programs and strategies. CGRDC staff can play a critical role by collaborating with private sector businesses to inform them of the state's programs and assist the CGRDC's membership (the applicants for most programs) to more easily access state resources on their behalf. Since the CGRDC also is home the state's two ports, they may wish to mention their support of that "business cluster". The State's Maritime Center of Innovation is in Savannah."

## 6.1.1 "Entrepreneur - Friendly" Initiative

The Georgia Department of Economic Development's (GDEcD) Small Business & Innovation Division provides a community-based program that helps create an entrepreneur environment, building entrepreneur and small business strategy into the community's overall economic development strategies. A map of Entrepreneur – Friendly communities is included with the GDEcD Memorandum in the Appendix of this document.

The GDEcD Regional Project Managers-Entrepreneur & Small Business (RPM-ESB) will take a community through proven methods designed to establish an entrepreneur support program, help them better understand their existing entrepreneur environment and develop sustainable, effective local strategies.

## 6.1.2 Georgia Work Ready Initiative

Georgia Work Ready was launched in August 2006 by Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce to improve the job training and marketability of Georgia's workforce and drive future economic growth for the state. It is the only one of its kind to be conducted through a partnership between a state government and state chamber of

commerce, ensuring that companies can more reliably match the right people with the right jobs.

This workforce training initiative assesses the skills of Georgia's workers, determines valuable job training opportunities and assures companies that the state can provide a long-term, qualified labor supply. Through a voluntary workforce assessment system called Work Ready, the program measures the "real world" skills that employers believe are critical for job success today and for mastering the innovative technologies tomorrow's jobs will require.

Work Ready utilizes the nationally accredited WorkKeys® assessment system developed by ACT to measure individual workers' skills in the areas of applied mathematics, reading for information and locating information. Participating individuals then receive a Work Ready Certificate that indicates their level of work readiness based on their performance.

Additional information can be found at: http://gaworkready.org/index.html.

The Georgia Work Ready initiative includes four key elements:

- Work Ready Certificate: Designed for individuals, it allows workers to take a free job assessment and then become eligible to receive a certificate indicating their skill and knowledge levels to potential employers. The certificate guarantees that job seekers have the portable skills reasoning, reading and basic math to serve as a solid foundation for more customized training. Assessments are conducted through the state's 33 technical colleges of the Department of Technical and Adult Education and through two Board of Regents colleges with technical divisions. The technical colleges also provide free online gap training to help workers upgrade their job skills.
- Work Ready job profiling: Designed to help Georgia employers build the right workforces for their needs, Georgia Work Ready's job profiling program allows Georgia employers to profile required job tasks and skill levels to more easily match candidates to job opportunities. By comparing job profiles with individuals' certification levels, companies can make reliable decisions about hiring, training and program development. Normally a \$1,500 value, profiling is conducted at no cost at Work Ready Centers located at the state's technical colleges for those employers that meet minimum hiring criteria.
- Certified Work Ready Community: This voluntary initiative enables communities to demonstrate that they have the talented workforce needed to fill current and future jobs. The certification also shows a community's commitment to education and to improving high school graduation rates, important factors for driving businesses to an area. Community leaders and those in the education, business and industry sectors all can come together to help their communities achieve the Certified Work Ready Community designation.
- Work Ready Region: Through this program, which builds on the Certified Work Ready Community designation, multiple counties can work together to develop regional talent pools aligned to a common, existing strategic industry. Work Ready Regions must be able to demonstrate that they have met the following criteria: improved regional high school graduation rates; counties obtaining Certified Work Ready Community status; increasing the number of students in strategic industry majors in two- and four-year colleges; closing the skills and achievement gaps; successfully transitioning workers into higher skilled jobs; and

training the existing workforce in high tech skills to improve productivity and competitiveness.

## 6.2 Tools for CEDS Implementation

**Business Development Funds** are various federal, state, and local financing programs which help provide business and industry with needed capital to make their projects happen. The following listing is not all inclusive but merely a listing of the most used, or best known, programs in the area. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs publishes an "Economic Development Financing Packet" which is an excellent inclusive listing of various financing programs. Copies may be obtained by contacting:

Georgia Department of Community Affairs 60 Executive Park South, N.E Atlanta, GA 30329-2231 (404) 679-4940

http://www.dca.state.ga.us/

Incentives vary from local initiatives to statewide initiatives. State incentives include:

- 1) A Job Tax Credit program was designed to encourage businesses to locate and to expand in the state by providing tax credits for certain businesses that create new jobs. The state is divided into four tiers based on demographic calculation of need and the more needy counties are provided a higher tax credit. It should be noted that joint authorities created before a certain date are allowed to take the tax credit of the highest tier of any of the counties participating but those created after that date are allowed an additional \$500 per job.
- 2) Opportunity/Enterprise Zones: In 1997, the General Assembly enacted the Enterprise Zone Employment Act, recognizing the need for revitalization in many areas of Georgia. The State Enterprise Zone program intends to improve geographic areas within cities and counties that are suffering from disinvestment, underdevelopment, and economic decline, encouraging private businesses to reinvest and rehabilitate these places.

The Enterprise Zone area must meet at least three of the following five criteria:

- Pervasive poverty established using 1990 Census data. Each block group must have at least a 20 percent poverty level.
- Unemployment Rate (average for preceding year) at least 10 percent higher than State or significant job dislocation.
- Underdevelopment evidenced by lack of building permits, licenses, land disturbance permits, etc. lower than development activity within the local body's jurisdiction.
- General distress and adverse conditions (population decline, health and safety issues, etc.).

• General Blight evidenced by the inclusion of any portion of the nominated area in an urban redevelopment area.

The following are incentives to any potential developer:

- Property tax exemption -- OCGA §36-88-3(1)
- Abatement or reduction in occupation taxes, regulatory fees, building inspection fees, and other fees that would otherwise be imposed on qualifying business --OCGA §36-88-9(a)

In 2004, the General Assembly passed, and the Governor signed legislation (HB 984) to create a program within the State's Job Tax Credit Program of "Opportunity Zone" tax credits. The Opportunity Zone Tax Credit Program authorizes the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to designate as a "less developed area" an area that is contained by two or more census block groups with 20 percent or greater poverty, within an enterprise zone, and where an urban redevelopment plan exists. Opportunity Zones are intended to encourage development and redevelopment in smaller geographic areas than are served by existing economic development programs. State resources are directed towards these "pockets of poverty" in a way that can be supplemented by federal programs that DCA administers.

Opportunity Zone Tax Credit Benefits:

- the maximum Job Tax Credit allowed under law
- use of Job Tax Credits against 100 percent of income tax liability and withholding
- expansion of the definition of "business enterprise" to include all businesses of any nature
- 3) Freeport Tax Exemption program allows counties/cities to offer manufacturers and distributors exemptions ranging between 20 and 100 percent on ad valorem taxes on raw material, goods in process and finished goods destined for out of state shipment .A County/City offering this tax exemption may have a competitive advantage in attracting a new business over a County that does not offer the tax incentive.

**Grants** are, of course, the best source of funds for the encouragement or inducement of economic development as there are four primary sources of grant funds, i.e. Georgia Department of Community Affairs, the OneGeorgia Authority, the Economic Development Administration, and the United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development.

Employment Incentive Program (EIP) is a pool of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds which have been set aside to provide the funds essential to allow a local economic development project to go forward. Often referred to as "gap financing", the EIP funds are used as either a grant to local governments to provide essential public infrastructure or a grant to local governments who may then loan the funds to provide essential financing to the company. In either case the funding must be essential to make the project happen and job opportunities must be created for low- and moderate-income persons. In EIP projects where the company was made a loan by the local government, the repayment of the loan, both principle and interest, may be retained by the local

government as capitalization for the local revolving loan fund (RLF). The RLF may then fund future projects meeting the same criteria as the original source of funds.

Redevelopment Fund Program (RFP) provides flexible financial assistance to local governments to assist them in implementing challenging economic and community development projects that cannot be undertaken with existing public sector grant and loan programs. The Redevelopment Fund will reward locally initiated public/private partnerships by providing financing to leverage private sector investments in commercial, downtown, and industrial redevelopment and revitalization projects that need Redevelopment Fund investment to proceed. While all CDBG funded projects that create jobs must meet applicable low and moderate-income criteria, the Redevelopment Fund will allow projects to be approved using a "eliminating slum and blight" national objective. The Redevelopment Fund may support and extend DCA's existing CDBG programs in order to allow redevelopment projects with "challenging economics" to be made competitive for DCA, private, and other public funding investments.

OneGeorgia Equity Fund is a community and economic development tool providing financial assistance including grants and loans that promote the health, welfare, safety and economic security of the citizens of the state through the development and retention of employment opportunities and the enhancement of various infrastructures that accomplish that goal. Eligible recipients of grant and loan funds include general-purpose local governments (municipalities and counties), local government authorities and joint or multi-County development authorities in rural counties suffering from high poverty rates. Applications from Conditionally Eligible counties will be considered when proposed projects have regional impact and support. Equity funds may be used for a multitude of economic development activities provided they are designed to increase employment opportunities.

OneGeorgia EDGE Fund The Economic Development, Growth & Enterprise (EDGE) program is a specialized economic development tool that may be used to enhance Georgia's competitiveness in attracting significant economic development projects. EDGE should not be used when other state or federal programs could be used or when local funds are sufficient to accomplish economic development goals. Due to the specialized nature of the program and the limited resources available, potential applicants are encouraged to contact the OneGeorgia Authority. Generally, EDGE funds are targeted for competitive projects in rural counties suffering from high poverty. "Competitive project" generally describes a situation in which a business is considering no less than two communities as a site for relocation or expansion where at least one community is outside Georgia and at least one, but not more than one, is in Georgia.

**Economic Development Administration (EDA)** provides grant funds to help build or expand public facilities essential to industrial and commercial growth such as industrial parks. These grant funds usually cover 60 percent of the project costs with the respective local governments funding 40 percent. Over the past forty years EDA funds have been used in almost every County in the region.

EDA also provides grants to designated economic development districts for planning and economic development technical assistance.

**USDA, Rural Development** The financial programs support such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities and electric and telephone service. The program promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools. The program offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services. And the program provides technical assistance to help communities undertake community empowerment programs.

Rural Development has an \$86 billion dollar portfolio of loans and administers nearly \$16 billion in program loans, loan guarantees, and grants through our programs. Rural Development achieves its mission by helping rural individuals, communities and businesses obtain the financial and technical assistance needed to address their diverse and unique needs. Rural Development works to make sure that rural citizens can participate fully in the global economy.

SBA offers three programs which have been used in the coastal Georgia region, SBA 7a, SBA 504 and LowDoc. The SBA 7a program is a conventional bank loan with the SBA providing a guarantee to the local financial institutions. The CGRDC provides the role of project facilitator and loan packager on behalf of the bank and the business. The CGRDC staff has packaged \$20.5 million worth of SBA guaranteed loans which created or saved 908 jobs.

The SBA 504 provides direct financing for 40 percent of the fixed assets needed by the new or expanding business. The SBA takes a second lien position behind a conventional bank lender who provides 50 percent of the project financing. The business is only required to inject 10 percent of the project. The 90 percent long-term financing offered by this program has been very beneficial to the economic development of the region. The SBA 504 program has made 108 loans in the region totaling \$64 million and creating or saving 1,995 jobs.

# 6.3 Goals, Objectives and Strategies

The following pages present six goals identified through the CEDS process. These goals are broad and include objectives and strategies for achievement.

**Local Governments** 

6.3.1 Goal 1 Market the coastal Georgia region inside Georgia and outside Georgia.

**Objective** Responsibility **Funding Source** Strategy 1:1.1 Develop a Regional CGRDC, Member CGRDC, Local 1:1. Increase local economic development organizations participation in regional, state-Marketing Plan. Organizations, GDEcD iurisdictions wide, national, and international marketing activities and organizations. 1:2. Develop marketing plans to address: (1) 1:2.1 Develop effective utilization CGRDC, Local CGRDC, Local Economic Development Organizations, Port and related industries, (2) Military of communication technologies in Organizations facilities, (3) Tourism, (4) Forestry products. economic development Local Governments (5) Medical services, and (6) Commercial presentation and other marketing fishing industry. efforts. CGRDC, Local Economic RDC, Local Governments 1:2.2 Raise awareness and train **Development Organizations** local economic development professionals in the utilization of communication technologies and GIS. 1:2.3 Prepare marketing plans for CGRDC, Local Economic DNR, Private Sector Development Organizations,

each economic cluster identifying

key strategies.

## 6.3.2 Goal 2

Encourage more intergovernmental cooperation between local governments, planning organizations, and economic development agencies including the Coastal Georgia RDC.

Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Funding Source
2:1. Implement a regional economic development forum for networking between coastal economic development organizations.	2:1.1 Establish a regional economic development forum to increase networking and cooperative activities.	CGRDC, Local Economic Development Organizations, Local Governments	CGRDC, Local Organizations, EDA
2:2 Continue involvement in implementation of the Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield Joint Land Use Study.	2:2.1 Development an implementation strategy for the JLUS.	CGRDC, Fort Stewart/ Hunter Army Airfield.	OEA
2:3. Continue involvement with The Camden Partnership and Kings Bay NSB.	2:3.1 Participate in The Camden Partnership activities associated with the Kings Bay NSB.	CGRDC, Camden Partnership, Kings Bay NSB	Kings Bay NSB, Camden Partnership, OEA

### 6.3.3 Goal 3

Develop long-term plans to guide growth via infrastructure planning, transportation planning and corridor development, public transportation, regional water and sewer provision planning.

Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Funding Source
3:1. Initiate sub-regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies addressing action steps for local jurisdictions.	Prepare sub-regional plans for distinct regional synergies.	CGRDC, Local Governments	EDA, Local Governments
3:2 Support implementation of the recommendations from the Coastal Comprehensive Plan.	Regional Economic Development Forum adopt, and implement recommendations.	CGRDC, Local Governments, Local Economic Development Organizations	Local Governments, Local Economic Development Organizations
3:3. Develop a region-wide infrastructure plan encompassing transportation, water and water withdrawal, wastewater treatment, solid waste, parks and greenspace.	3:3.1 Facilitate coordination and cooperation between local government's development authorities, RDC's, Department of Economic Development, Colleges and Universities, EPD, DNR, DOT.	CGRDC, Local Jurisdictions, Coastal Workforce Services	CGRDC, Local Governments
	3:3.2 Support regional approach to highway development including development of a regional transportation plan addressing transit, rail, air and highway development.	CGRDC, GDOT, Ports	GDOT
	3:3.3 Support a regional approach to water and wastewater management.	RDC, Local Governments	EPD, DNR, Local Governments
3:4. Coordinate local, state, and federal economic development planning and implementation.	3:4.1 Support/facilitate economic development activities that result in improvements in the regional tax base and job creation.	CGRDC, Economic Development Organizations	EDA, Local Governments

3:4.2 Create a regional database of Industrial Parks and available properties.	Local Government's Development Authorities	DCA, EDA, Local Government
3:4.3 Champion public services and facilities planning to adequately accommodate existing and future economic growth.	Local Government's Development Authorities	DCA, EDA, Local Governments
3:4.4 Assist local and regional industrial development organizations with development of grants-in-aid applications for industrial/business development consistent with local and regional objectives. Assist with project implementation as requested.	RDC	EDA
3:4.5 Facilitate individual infrastructure projects that meet the goals of this strategy.	Local Economic Development organizations, CGRDC	EDA, USDA, DCA, Local Governments, others

## 6.3.4 Goal 4

Develop a competitive workforce by increasing educational opportunities, and implementing key actions regarding workforce changes and development. Undertake activities to develop a qualified, skilled workforce.

Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Funding Source
1: Encourage career academies and technical schools, four-year institutions, and universities in the coastal region. Participate in location and expansion planning.	4:1.1 Support initiatives to start or expand workforce educational opportunities.	CGRDC, Local Governments, Local Economic Development Organizations, Board of Regents	Local Governments, GDOE
2: Support the Coastal Workforce Services	4:2.1 Work with CWS to	Coastal Workforce Services,	Coastal Workforce Services
Strategic Plan recommendations.	implement key workforce actions.	Local Governments	

**6.3.5 Goal 5**Stimulate entrepreneurship through start-up businesses, small businesses, and expansion of larger businesses.

Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Funding Source
5:1. Coordinate efforts with established small and emerging business assistance organizations including SBDC, Chambers, etc.	5:1.1 Study existing industries, special or unique economic activities and recent trends in small businesses to attempt to identify potential satellite (secondary and teriary) industries or other economic development ideas or potential projects (research and market studies).	CGRDC, Small Business Development Centers, Universities	Universities, SBA
5:2. Work to expand financing opportunities for small and emerging businesses through CADDA, Southeast Georgia Developers Association, and others.	5:2.1 Work with small business organizations to expand financing opportunities.	Small Business Development Centers, Local Governments, State Government	EDA, Local Development Organizations, Banks

## 6.3.6 Goal 6

Integrate the growth of the Georgia ports into regional economic development plans to enhance economic development opportunities for the entire coast. Include consideration of the Jacksonville, Florida port.

Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Funding Source
6:1. Invite and Encourage GA and FL port representatives to participate in regional economic development forums.	Hold quarterly meetings of Economic Developmental professional and port representatives.	RDC	RDC, Local Governments, Port Authorities
6:2. Engage port authorities and coastal communities in decision making processes regarding land use, location, and expansion, of existing facilities, decentralized facilities, and new facilities, including: (a) adjacent land use, and (b) support facilities location.	Engage local governments and ports authorities in expansion planning.	Ports Authorities, RDC, Local Government's Development Authorities	Ports Authorities, Local Governments

### 7 Performance Measures

The quarterly and annual reports of accomplishments act as the evaluation tools utilized by the local and regional CEDS committees. This document is maintained by the support staff of the CGRDC under the guidance of the regional CEDS committee and CGRDC Board of Directors.

#### Economic Measures

- ➤ Building permits: commercial and residential.
- > Employment rate by county.
- > Population growth rate by county.
- Number of new businesses licenses.
- Number of new companies relocating/expanding to the region.
- Average weekly wage/per capita income/median household income/government transfer payments.
- > Poverty level.
- > Changes in the economic environment of the region.

#### **❖** Investment

- Number and types of investments undertaken in the region.
- ➤ Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS.
- > Dollar amount of new investment.
- ➤ Number of financially successful projects project still in business after 3 or 5 years.
- ➤ Increase in industrial/commercial lending in the region.
- Deposits in banks and credit unions.

#### Planning

- ➤ Is a needs assessment completed for sector markets in the region and is an identified course of action with dates that are followed.
- Number of marketable acres zoned and available for industrial development.
- > Development of new infrastructure to facilitate recruitment and expansion efforts.
- ➤ Increase in diversification/distribution of occupation/industry sectors.

### Workforce

- > Increase the level of educational attainment.
- ➤ Development of new/expanded education and training programs to improve the quality of the local labor force and meet the emerging needs of employers.
- Number of jobs created, by year, after implementation of the CEDS.
- Number of jobs retained in the region.

While these measures may be tracked by the Regional Development Center/Economic Development District, and are potential measures for tracking economic growth and diversity, these measures will be refined as experience and time show relevance.

## 8 Appendix: Reference Documents

The following documents were reviewed during the development of this comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. In addition to this list, local comprehensive plans were reviewed for additional data and recommendations.

- America's Perfect Storm: Three Forces Changing Our Nation's Future, Irwin. Kirsch, et. al. Northwestern University and the Educational Testing Service, January, 2007.
- Camden County Economic Diversification Study. Georgia Tech's Office of Economic Development and Technology Ventures, October, 2005
- Creating Excellence in International Business Development Initiatives. Savannah Development Authority, May, 2004.
- Economic Diversification of Bryan County, Georgia. Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute, 2007.
- Liberty County Economic Diversification Strategy. RKG Associates, Inc. January, 2007.
- St. Marys Economic Development Strategy (draft). Summer, 2007.
- Strategic Plan. Coastal Workforce Services, April, 2005.



#### MEMORANDUM

TO:

Georgia's Regional Development Center Executive Directors

FROM:

Heidi Green, Deputy Commissioner



SUBJECT:

Economic Development Priorities in Georgia

DATE:

July 2, 2007

It is our pleasure to assist your Regional Development Center as you complete your Comprehensive Economic Development strategy for the Economic Development Administration under the U. S. Department of Commerce. Continued funding from EDA is critical to our economic development efforts and projects in Georgia.

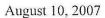
Georgia is home to world-renowned research centers, top ranked universities and Fortune 500 companies. Georgia combines a talented workforce and high quality of living with abundant resources and a thriving economy to create a fertile environment for economic development. The Georgia Department of Economic Development helps drive Georgia's economic growth.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) is the state's sales and marketing arm, the lead agency for attracting new business investment, encouraging the expansion of existing industry and small businesses, locating new markets for Georgia products, attracting tourists to Georgia, and promoting the state as a location for film, video and music projects, as well as planning and mobilizing state resources for economic development. GDEcD is a global agency and one-stop-shop for accessing Georgia's assets and finding the right components for success. We accomplish these goals through the combined efforts of our Global Commerce Team, Tourism Team, Film, Video & Music Team and our Marketing & Communications Team.

Activities identified in the CEDS that do not conflict with the goals stated above would be deemed consistent with the efforts of GDEcD. Upon approval of the CEDS for your region, please share the completed Strategy with your GDEcD Regional Project Managers to further collaborative efforts between our respective organizations.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this information in more detail, please feel free to call me at 404-962-4070.

HG/db





Enclosed is a copy of the state's concurrence letter that is required to go into your CEDS document.

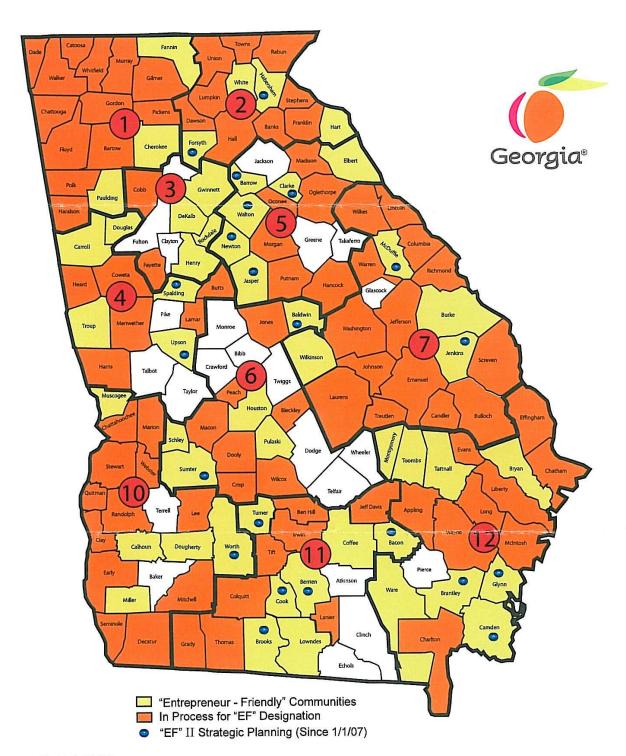
Also enclosed are 2 handouts from the tour at the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

Read the minutes for details of the meeting.

Call if you have questions

David Sargent GMRDC

## Georgia Department of Economic Development "Entrepreneur - Friendly" Initiative



Updated 08/06/07